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Presentations included in this collection are: (1) "Vocational Education for the Disadvantaged: Lessons from Government Funded Programs," by Garth L. Mangum, (2) "Curriculum Adaptations," by Frances S. McDonough, (3) "Case Study: Newark Manpower Training Skills Center," by George R. Quarles, (4) "The Development of Vocational Education Teachers of the Disadvantaged," by Lawrence Reddick, (5) "Counseling and Supportive Services in Vocational Education for the Disadvantaged," by Richard Greenfield, (6) "Perspectives on the Workshop," by Martin Hamburger, (7) "Curriculum Implications for an Educational System that Meets the Needs of Disadvantaged Students," by Jerry C. Olson, (8) "Turning Vocational Education to the Disadvantaged: Working with the Employers and Unions," by Robert Schrank and Susan Stein, (9) "Involving the Community in Vocational Education for the Disadvantaged," by Dan Dewees and Lester Wooten, (10) "Vocational Education for the Disadvantaged: Lessons from Ford Foundation Funded Programs," by Marvin J. Feldman, (11) "Review of Case Presentation Materials and Techniques," by Louis Ramundo and Michael R. Robinson, and (12) "Vocational Education for the Disadvantaged: Planning, Organizing and Operating Through a Systems Approach," by Cleveland L. Dennard. (CH)

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**VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FOR THE DISADVANTAGED:**

**LESSONS FROM GOVERNMENT FUNDED PROGRAMS**

**by**

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**Presented at the**

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Engineering, not science, is the immediate instrument of progress. The innovator, not the inventor, is directly responsible for technological change. Without research, experiment and exploration there would be little basis for advancement, but without application all that goes before it is a sterile exercise.

Beginning in 1962, a series of federally-sponsored programs focused on the remedial task of making employable and bringing into employment those facing a variety of disadvantages in the competition of the job market. Shortly after the passage of the Manpower Development and Training Act which marked the start of a modest effort on behalf of those already in the labor market and in trouble, Congress addressed itself to the prevention of labor market disadvantage in the Vocational Education Act of 1963, the first really new look at federally-supported vocational education since it was launched in 1917. Among its people-oriented, as contrasted with labor market-oriented directives was special attention to those whose social, economic and academic handicaps prevented their succeeding in regular vocational education programs.

After vocational educators all but ignored this specific but toothless admonition, Congress, in 1968, abandoned permissiveness. Earmarked funds were to be available "if and only if" they were used for the assigned purpose. For good measure, physically and mentally handicapped persons, usually neglected by vocational rehabilitators until after their school years had passed, were given earmarked attention.

Vocational educators might have been excused for not serving the disadvantaged in 1963. There was little experience to guide those who sought to serve this unfamiliar clientele. That excuse is no longer valid. There is a vast store of experience growing out of manpower and antipoverty programs. The limited "special needs" efforts and the "exemplary programs" under VEA '63 have added their bit. But, though vocational educators have been directly involved in the conduct of manpower programs, there has been little transference of experience from remedial to preventive undertakings. Inventions have been made, though that phase of the process is not complete. It is the innovator who identifies, disseminates and applies those lessons who will make possible successful vocational education for the disadvantaged.

## **LESSONS FROM VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR THE DISADVANTAGED**

Vocational programs for the special needs groups have been inventoried but their undoubtedly valuable experiences have never been analyzed, evaluated, and made available to other practitioners.<sup>1</sup> A particularly valuable evaluation and compilation of case studies growing out of the "exemplary program" experiences is now available and merits careful study.<sup>2</sup> Notation will be made here of only a few highlights.

Evaluators found few exemplary programs willing to serve hard core, inner city, low IQ, disadvantaged youngsters. Similarly, they identified strong federal, state, and local leadership seeking good vocational education for the best students but few voices on behalf of similar service to the disadvantaged. Those programs which did seek to serve the disadvantaged tended to offer minimal training to qualify for terminal positions in low-skill jobs.

It is possible to identify a few common success factors in the better programs. Small classes, individualized study, and progression at a pace adapted to the student's abilities were found to be almost mandatory. Yet that flexibility had to occur within a structured and disciplined situation. The vocational aspects were most successful when accompanied by pre-vocational and post-vocational programs with strong academic components. Job cluster training, assistance in making vocational choices, and all those elements considered to be the most progressive in regular vocational education were also best for the disadvantaged. Cooperative education was given high marks. Teaching machines, computers, team teaching, etc. helped but the crucial element was a staff with a strong desire to teach the disadvantaged. Teachers had to have both experience and a youthful outlook. Teacher aides from the disadvantaged groups contributed to success as did parental and community support and multi-agency involvement. It was not necessary to "water down" standards, given flexibility and competent teaching, but it was necessary to eliminate unrealistic, outdated or irrelevant standards. In short, good exemplary programs for the disadvantaged turned out to be remarkably like good exemplary programs, once it was resolved to meet the student where he was and take him sympathetically but systematically to where he ought to be.

### **SUMMARY LESSONS FROM MANPOWER PROGRAMS**

Competing indecisively for first rank as the provider of lessons and developer of techniques for vocationally educating the disadvantaged are the MDTA experimental and demonstration (E & D) programs and Job Corps, both with the primary assignment of training and making employable disadvantaged youth, and the regular MDTA program, which, though less experimental, has had more money and more divergent enrollments. Of lesser, but still substantial significance, have been the Adult Basic Education programs (ABE) and, to a smaller extent, components of the various work programs such as the Neighborhood Youth Corps (NYC), Work Experiment and Training Program (WET), Operation Mainstream and the Community Action Program.

Identified in these experiences has been a large population, previously neglected or ill-served by all education, and characterized by some combination of:

1. Concentration in central city slums or rural depressed areas;
2. Low Family incomes and low educational attainment of parents;
3. Unfamiliarity by personal experience or role models with the values and customs of the world of work;
4. Disillusionment and frustration with and rejection of or by the existing school system;
5. Restricted time horizons and limited ambitions imposed by unfamiliarity with the world's opportunities and a conditioned disbelief in its promises;
6. Over-representedness among minority youth.

Also identified have been the general characteristics of a successful program of rehabilitation:

1. Outreach to bring to the disillusioned or ignorant knowledge of opportunities too easily ignored;
2. Early introduction of rehabilitation efforts to offset the debilitating effects of deficient home and neighborhood environments;
3. Orientation to the world of work for those denied exposure to work habits and knowledge of alternative vocational choices
4. Integration of basic education and skill training, very low levels of the former preventing success in the latter, while the obvious relevance of the skills can provide the motivation for the more academic offering;
5. Recognition of the complex interaction of an almost overwhelming variety of education, health, housing,



transportation, geographical, legal, and family problems, the solving or amelioration of which may be essential to successful preparation for employment;

6. The incentive of a direct and obvious job promise for those frequently experiencing overpromise and underdelivery;
7. Awareness that (a) rejection of low quality job offerings may be as often the reason for unemployment as the lack of requisite skills, (b) those in poverty while working at low wage jobs exceed in number those suffering from unemployment, and therefore, (c) increasing the productivity inherent in the job may be as crucial as the productive potential of the worker.

All of the practical lessons from curriculum, teaching methods, supportive services, community, employer and union relationships, planning, organization and administering of programs and special approaches to the needs of special groups cannot be enumerated here. It should be enough to indicate a few of the specific developments and to provide a beginning bibliography for those with the ambition to search out and apply the lessons of hard won experience.

## **EXAMPLES FROM EXPERIENCE**

The lessons the experience of manpower and antipoverty programs offer for those who provide vocational education to the disadvantaged can be most usefully divided between those applicable to initial preparation for employment and those more relevant to remedial efforts for those already out of school and in trouble in the competitive job market. Vocational education is, and will be, increasingly involved in both.

## **EDUCATION FOR EMPLOYMENT**

Adequate vocational education for the disadvantaged may well be a "cradle to the rocking chair" proposition. The entire realm of education for the disadvantaged, whether it be dropout studies, manpower activities or experience with Head Start and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, has demonstrated the need for remedial early childhood education to compensate for the handicaps of inadequate home and neighborhood environments. Yet, the very success of Head Start has simply accelerated the already substantial trends toward pre-school education among the affluent, leaving the poor further behind than ever.

Also evident among the nondisadvantaged is the fact that changes in home life and in the nature and structure of employment are making the transition from school to work more difficult. Where once the child grew up knowing and often participating in the work that earned the family's livelihood, increasingly "work" means only that the family breadwinner leaves in the morning with a briefcase and returns with it at night. What happens in between is a mystery totally beyond the experiences of more and more youth. "Dick and Jane" books with a "world of work" inhabited by one briefcase-carrying father, a grandfather who keeps a farm for vacationing grandchildren, plus a sprinkling of postmen, policemen, and bus drivers, are of little help. For the disadvantaged, income may mean the caseworker's black notebook and the mailed public assistance check. "Technology for Children" in New Jersey and similar efforts at the Nova schools in Florida are grains of sand in the vast void where elementary school orientation to the world of work ought to be.<sup>1</sup> The permissive language of the vocational education for the disadvantaged, research and demonstration and exemplary project provisions of 1968 Vocational Education Amendments and Title

I of ESEA provide opportunities but not pressure to launch a few satellites into that void.

At the secondary level and beyond, everything known about student attitudes from dropout studies to unrest on the campus stresses "relevance" as the key to successful motivation.<sup>2</sup> The present system, dominated, in Rupert Evan's terminology, by "school for schooling's sake"<sup>3</sup> is relevant primarily to preparation for college and is, therefore, seen as relevant only by the college-bound and not by all of them. The alternative to the current compartmentalization of education among the academic, the general and the vocational is spelled out in the following lengthy quote from a report which, though the U.S. Office of Education refused to publish it, was a major influence in shaping the Vocational Education Amendments of 1968:

It is no longer possible to compartmentalize education into general, academic, and vocational components. Education is a crucial element in preparation for a successful working career at any level. With rising average educational attainment, better educated people are available so that the employer seldom needs to accept the less educated. . . . The educational skills of spoken and written communication, computation, analytical techniques, knowledge of society and one's role in it, and skill in human relations are as vital as the skills of particular occupations.

On the other hand, employability skills are equally essential to education. If education is preparation for life, and if practically everyone's life and opportunities for self-expression and self-fulfillment include work, then only the successfully employable are successfully educated. . . .

Vocational education is not a separate discipline within education, but it is a basic objective of all education and must be a basic element of each person's education. It is also a teaching technique which may have even more to offer as method than as substance. As a selecting out process for the professions, education has fostered, stressed, and rewarded the verbal skills important to these pursuits. It has given too little attention to development of attitudes, manipulative skills, and adaptability to new situations. In the process of emphasizing verbal skills, the predominant methods of instruction are lecture and discussion, and little attention is given to the alternative technique of learning by doing. . . . For many students, the techniques of vocational education can supply a core around which an attractive package of academic as well as skill content can be prepared which will be more palatable and useful to undermotivated students than either alone. This may be most applicable to those from deprived environments whose verbal experiences have been limited and whose time horizons have been shortened by expectation of failure. Skill development can be accomplished through work experience or through education in the school's shops and laboratories. The key is to build a better means of integrating academic education, skill training, and work experience. The common objective should be a successful life in which employment has a crucial role."<sup>4</sup>

A number of foundation-financed experiments have pointed the way toward this goal with "zero reject" as the motto.<sup>5</sup>

## REMEDYING EDUCATION'S MISTAKE

The assignment of the manpower and antipoverty programs has been remedy rather than preparation. With the onrush of educational attainment, many whose preparation may have been adequate when they entered the labor market now find themselves falling behind in competition with better prepared new entrants. Others continue to enter the job market without adequate preparation, adding to an underprepared pool of from 11 million to 15

million, faster than the variety of remedial programs can siphon them off. Remediation must be a key part of vocational education for the disadvantaged but identification of those problems can offer lessons for prevention as well.<sup>6</sup>

## REMEDIAL BASIC EDUCATION

One of the first lessons gleaned from the manpower programs of the 1960s was that not retraining those whose substantive skills had become obsolete but training for those who had never had skills was the task at hand. Accompanying this realization was demonstration of the incredibly poor job being done by the schools in behalf of many of the noncollege bound, particularly those from the depressed rural areas and the big city slums. The rapid rise of education attainment made obsolete what had been adequate preparation for the older worker. The public schools were doing an impressive mass education job for the majority. However, for many of those most in need of social, intellectual and manual skills, not only was the retention power of the schools low, but achievement was years behind grade level and much of the offering was irrelevant to their lives and needs.

Basic remedial education was a prerequisite and necessary accompaniment to skill training but neither experience nor materials were available. Job Corps Centers planned for a minimum fifth grade achievement and then found they frequently had to go as low as the third grade. Early MDTA projects found those with tenth grade attainment typically operating at a sixth grade level. Both programs were forced to develop their own materials and techniques which, if gathered, codified and made available, represent a major resource for vocationally educating the disadvantaged. As many as 20 separate programs including MDTA, Vocational Education and public assistance, in addition to those activities sponsored by the Adult Basic Education program transferred to the Office of Education from OEO, provide such remedial education for adults, mostly in nonwork or nonskill training contexts. The Office of Education estimated its 1967 enrollment in such courses as over 400,000. The lessons emerging from these experiences are undoubtedly considerable, if only they were readily available.

However, discovery of the high incidence of illiteracy and near illiteracy did not end the story. Communications and work adjustment skills had to be added. For Puerto Ricans, Mexican Americans and Orientals the first obstacle was teaching English as a second language. However, native American residents of the ghettos often found it as difficult to communicate with middle class teachers and, by implication, future bosses. Their short time horizons, a consequence of life offering little hope for the future, their lack of familiarity with the habits and disciplines of the work place and, frequently, their hostility, distrust and disbelief in all promises from society, required work adjustment training as well, again calling for development of materials and techniques.

The third and present stage in remedial basic education is recognition of widespread illiteracy among the employed. Firms with formal promotion policies complained of seniority ladders clogged with the nonpromotable. Growing awareness that not just a job—any job—but a successful working career for the disadvantaged was the goal spread this concern. The major actors in this stage are private firms selling their services directly to employers, though often underwritten by federal funds. Examples are the Board for Fundamental Education (BFE), MIND, Inc., and U.S. Research and Development Corporation, each with its own materials and techniques and substantial experience which should be synthesized into the total resource available to vocational education.

Among the lessons learned have been (1) the need for entirely new and different materials and techniques for teaching basic literacy to adults, (2) the extreme tact necessary to avoid infringing upon the sensitivities of adult illiterates, (3) the usefulness of programmed learning, (4) the importance of avoiding traditional classroom



atmosphere for those whose school experiences were rarely pleasant, and (5) the need to relate basic education directly to work or training. Particularly interesting as a model is the contract among the steel companies and union, the Department of Labor and the Board of Fundamental Education. Rather than being paid only on a cost reimbursement basis, the BFE is paid a bonus for successful graduates.

## **THE NEED FOR SUPPORTIVE SERVICES**

As early as recognition of the basic education problem was demonstration that remedial training for the most disadvantaged was unlikely to be successful without attention to a great many social and personal problems. Stipends were necessary for those with family responsibilities (and, as motivation for others) and they had to be high enough to offset the pressure to quit training to take a short term job. Just taking training rather than remaining at home added to living costs.

Health has proven to be a serious obstacle for many, adding substantial medical costs to the Job Corps, sparking the request to add medical expenses to MDTA and encouraging the involvement of vocational rehabilitation and other public health agencies in successful training programs. Physical exams and minor health care have also been a significant cost factor in the JOBS program.

Day care centers are a necessary accompaniment to training for the mothers of small children but their absence will also negate the employment results of any training taken.

Many are so burdened with legal problems that relief from those pressures is necessary for successful training. Whenever employed, creditors and other legal claimants often descend upon the disadvantaged in such numbers as to reduce the attractiveness of work and of the employee. The out of phase combination of housing patterns, transportation systems and work or training locations pose serious obstacles. Training, for many, must be provided in the neighborhood but the problems return as they seek work. Cooperation among a wide variety of programs and agencies is one of the products of identifying these complex interrelationships.

Yet vocational education is not left alone to face these needs. The same programs which identified the problems have also generated a cluster of institutions and agencies, public, private, nonprofit and for profit, to deal with them. Examples are the Community Action agencies, the Jewish Education and Vocational Service, Opportunities Industrialization Centers (OIC), YMCAs, experimental correctional centers and private firms selling services ranging through research, evaluation, basic education, sensitivity training and technical assistance.

## **CURRICULA AND TEACHING METHODS**

Most manpower training has been directed toward entry level jobs long considered beneath the dignity of a training institution. People lacking even those competencies assumed to be the common possession of most job applicants had to be trained to a competitive level. Contrary to traditional practice, it proved necessary to take the enrollee from where he was to where he needed to be for employability rather than expect him to meet and adapt to

the requirements of the training course. Since most were under financial pressure, the goal was to get them into a job as soon as possible rather than coasting along at the traditionally leisurely pace of in-school courses. An example is the fact that a 26-week MDTA course may offer double the training exposure as two years in the normal public school vocational course.<sup>7</sup>

Just as they lacked basic education, typical disadvantaged trainees lacked sufficient experience with the world of work to make a valid vocational choice. Given limited experiences and verbal skills, they were not testable or counselable by familiar techniques. New nonverbally biased tests were developed based on work sampling rather than reading. Counseling from counselor with specific knowledge of the labor market and particular talents for relating to the disadvantaged were a necessary replacement for traditional approaches.<sup>8</sup>

Continuous on-site multioccupational projects and prevocational training were developed, allowing trainees to sample each occupation while undergoing basic education and intensive counseling until a desired and conceivable occupation was identified. Three imperatives became clear: relevance must be clearly identified; distasteful classroom memories must not be reinstated; the school day must be adapted to the students' attention span.

Since employment and training needs could not wait for the convenience of an annual September starting date, more flexible scheduling became necessary. Then, because those whose job and income needs were intense could not wait until the beginning of courses, whenever scheduled, modular training units were developed, allowing in some cases, new entrants at the beginning of each week. The modular approach also facilitated adaptation of training to the individual's needs, repeating some elements, leaving out others and referring him to a job whenever competence was adequate. The remarkable coincidence that every occupation and every trainee appears to require the same number of hours and the same schedule has at last been questioned.

Far from seeking to upgrade a school's image by careful selection of students, it has been demonstrated that (1) a "zero rejection" policy is feasible, (2) that vocational educators can get their "brownie points" and their satisfaction from successfully training the "untrainable," rather than by ruling out those who need the training most, and (3) it is possible to run an institution focusing upon the individual's need for skills rather than the convenience of school administration.

As much a part of the curriculum as basic education and skill training has often been free-wheeling group counseling and sensitivity training for instructors, employers and the supervisory staff of the latter. Programmed learning materials allow individuals to move at their own pace through a required sequence of studies.

Training and employment in paraprofessional occupations, the introduction of remedial education and skill training in correctional institutions, prisoner work release, coaching for military rejectees, work sample testing, vestibule training, prevocational training, work-experience training, pre-apprentice training, and programmed instruction for remedial education and skill training are all products of this innovative period.

## **RECRUITING AND TRAINING PERSONNEL**

Having to start from scratch in recruiting personnel, either by hiring them away from training activities already underway or turning journeymen into teachers, the manpower programs learned a number of lessons significant to the development of vocational education personnel. Ability to relate to the enrollees proved a more significant talent than either knowledge of subject matter or formal training in teaching methods. Of the latter two, the former appeared most important. In fact, little direct relationship appeared to exist for the population and the occupations

in question between formal credentials and effectiveness.

At the same time, the number of competent instructors, credentialed or not, who were familiar and sympathetic with the peculiar problems of their disadvantaged clients was grossly inadequate, requiring familiarization, sensitivity training, the establishment of Area Manpower Instructor Development Sites (AMIDS) and other efforts to develop competent and sympathetic staffs. The allocation of 2 percent of MDTA training funds to staff training reflects this discovery. Though Job Corps Centers drew their staffs primarily from public education and employer training departments, they too found it necessary to root out imbedded hostilities and misconceptions. Considering the social distance between most instructors and most manpower program participants, the fact that so many have made the transition from defensiveness and hostility to sympathy and commitment is remarkable and hopeful.

### **MOTIVATING THE UNDERMOTIVATED**

There is, of course, much truth in adages such as "You can lead a horse to water but you can't make him drink." Some face such overwhelming obstacles that training and employment are not realistic alternatives. A few undoubtedly prefer their status, but for most the issue appears to be one of hope. While some middle class social scientists would glorify the life of the poor, the latter show no such inclination. Studies suggest that most share the same middle class yearnings as the rest of the population but doubt the reality of their own access to them. Their horizons have been shortened to encompass only immediate gratification because their futures have always been too uncertain to merit investment. What appears to be lack of ambition and antisocial attitudes may be realistic responses to prevailing conditions.

Manpower training programs wrestled with this problem as they probed deeper among the disadvantaged. The displaced experienced workers who were the initial targets underwent retraining willingly with reasonable confidence that jobs would result. The more disadvantaged lacked that confidence and experience proved them right. Burdened with the complex handicaps of race, location, education and health, all too many found no job to compensate them for the investment of their time and effort. It was just one more unfulfilled promise. To successfully motivate the disadvantaged, a job at the end of training must be guaranteed. On-the-job training or coupled institutional and OJT courses were early efforts. The first was stymied by the employer's reluctance to hire the disadvantaged and the latter by the unwillingness of the two groups of administrators to cooperate.

The current answer in manpower programs is the "instant job." The disadvantaged are hired first and trained later, usually on the job at the employer's expense but subsidized by public funds. While this route is not available to vocational education, cooperative education provides the obvious channel. In fact, the disadvantaged person receiving remedial education and formal skill training institutionally and applying it simultaneously on the job for pay with both elements of his training under common supervision is in the best of all possible worlds. School responsibility for the trainee until adequately placed is a lesser motivation but one available on a more massive scale. An added bonus of a cooperative school-employer relationship or school participation in the placement process is a quick and clear identification of weaknesses in the curriculum or institution staff or obsolescence in the equipment.

### **THE NATURE OF TRAINING INSTITUTIONS**

The tendency in manpower programs has been to sharply separate remedial programs from initial preparation for



employment. Since the failures of the latter has contributed heavily to the former, this is not surprising, though there are pros and cons to the development. Most educational institutions have sought to avoid and eliminate the hard-to-educate and have felt little responsibility toward these failures and rejects. The constant drive of each school seems to be to upgrade its image and increase the restrictiveness of its entrance policies. MDTA skill centers and Job Corps Training Centers have emerged as specialized schools having the needs of the disadvantaged as their sole mission. Both have done an admirable job of their assignment, in developing methods and materials and creating a reward system which encourages administrators and instructors to deal with the most disadvantaged as well as in the training of their clients. Much of the experience recorded here has been their product.

Conceptually, however, there would be advantages to serving the disadvantaged within the context of community-wide training institutions. Stigma would be lessened, upward mobility encouraged and economies of scale offered in combining basic education, theory and skill training. As long as image rather than service is the stronger motivation, however, separatism is probably preferable. It appears doubtful that many educators are willing to serve the disadvantaged as long as they have a choice. In addition, with limited mobility requiring facilities near the areas of greatest need and considering the abysmal quality of ghetto schools, separate skill centers are probably necessary.

Part of the demonstration has been that training can occur almost anywhere, as long as there is a willingness to adapt to client needs. Prisons, which rarely offer more training opportunity than the doing of prison laundry and the manufacture of automobile license tags, have found that prerelease skill training can reduce recidivism rates drastically. Yet correctional funds are not generally available for the purpose and manpower funds cannot be spread thin enough for more than demonstration projects in cooperation with the prisons.

The Job Corps Centers and some MDTA experiences with residential skill centers have identified and supported a need long felt in vocational education for residential facilities. Job Corps suffered from indiscriminate use of residential training. Economic and social logic would have dictated residential schools for those from urban areas only as a last resort with the primary purpose being to offer a broad vocational curriculum to those from areas of scattered and scarce population. The statewide enrollment of the MDTA Center at Mahoning Valley, Ohio, is an example. These experiences should be surveyed more carefully, partially as evidence to confirm the need to fund the residential provisions of current law and, in part, to educate the administrators when that is accomplished.

## DISSEMINATION OF EXPERIENCE

As this brief survey suggests, the total sum of knowledge upon which to base an extensive program of vocational education is huge if not vast. Unfortunately, it is not readily available. No consistent effort has been made to gather, codify and disseminate the results of the experiences. The Office of Special Projects in the Labor Department in its Project Retrieval has employed expert consultants to summarize and give an overview of the lessons from its experimental and demonstration products for youth. To get the substance rather than the flavor of these experiments it is currently necessary to go to the unpublished and undisseminated reports themselves or to their authors. The Job Corps A and R reports circulate experiences among Job Corps Centers. Job Corps has also conducted a very small scale Project Interchange in cooperation with the National Education Association, bringing 21 public school teachers in 1966-67 and 17 in 1967-68 into Job Corps Centers for a year's experience. The Manpower Division of the Office of Education has also held some seminars and conferences to provide cross-fertilization among the staffs of the various skill centers. Since MDTA training is largely conducted within the public school system, a certain amount of informal transfer of experience occurs as personnel shift in assignments



from vocational schools to skill centers and back again.

Nevertheless, these efforts are small scale and sporadic and do little to disturb the generalization that a vast amount of experience relevant to vocational education's newly-affirmed assignment on behalf of the disadvantaged is simply lying fallow, ignored and wasted.

The experiences demonstrate and support:

1. Early Childhood education.
2. Elementary school orientation to the world of work.
3. The need to view vocational education as a teaching method and an educational objective rather than as a separate educational system with especial value for its contributions to relevance and motivation.
4. The critical need for and the methods of remedial basic education, communications and job hunting skills, work adjustment and prevocational training.
5. The value of vocational education to previously neglected clients such as prisoners, reservation Indians, the disadvantaged in general and the employed needing upgrading.
6. The possibilities and the motivating and training value of direct links between the school and the job.
7. The irrelevance and often the perverseness of many of the credentialing requirements for vocational education personnel and the critical need for sympathetic and relevantly trained staffs.
8. The arbitrariness and inflexibility of many curriculum and scheduling practices, the perverseness of entrance requirements and testing methods and reminder that adaptation of the school to the individual's needs rather than vice versa is the only defensible stance.
9. The variety of institutional, social and personal handicaps confronting the disadvantaged individual, his critical need for supportive services and the number of potentially cooperating institutions emerging to meet his needs.
10. The fact that the disadvantaged are not appreciably different in their yearnings and ambitions from anyone else once the possibilities of upward mobility are clear and realistic.

But none of these lessons identify, disseminate or incorporate themselves. An obvious project in which to invest vocational education research funds is the accumulation, analysis, codification, and dissemination of the experience. But that is only the first step. The imagination and initiative go from information to new techniques and materials is a scarce commodity. Conversion to the new tasks on behalf of the new clients will not come automatically. The Office of Education should develop and promote model curricula and even use its state plan approval authority to press for their use. Only then will the results of eight years of intensive experimentation with education and training of the competitively disadvantaged be adequately exploited.

## FOOTNOTES

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**CURRICULUM ADAPTATIONS**

by  
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for  
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Presented at the  
**NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FOR THE DISADVANTAGED**

Atlantic City, New Jersey

March 12, 13, 14, 1969

Sponsored by  
**NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT OF YOUTH**

145 East 32nd Street

New York, N. Y. 10016

(Under a grant from the U.S. Office of Education)

It is our philosophy that the disadvantaged, or any student for that matter, is likely to progress in direct ratio to the kind and quality of instruction he receives. Therefore, first of all, we have directed the attack toward the teacher and the materials he uses. Some four years ago in our state I was assigned the task of developing and writing occupational course of study guides and a variety of handbooks to provide better understanding and instruction for our disadvantaged trainees.

To develop training guides and course outlines suited to their needs, it seemed wise to work with the instructors of training programs in progress, to learn from their experiences, and to develop the materials partially at least on the basis of difficulties already encountered. Some trainee problems involved difficult attitudes, indifference, short attention span, day-dreaming, inability to concentrate, few personal goals, and a lack of motivation. Instructors also had some problems; namely, despair over the variance in ability and in academic background of the trainees, a tendency to prejudge a trainee's ability to learn and progress, unwillingness to innovate and depart from standard teaching methodology, impatience with slow learners, and inexperience with both individual and individualized instruction.

These problems were attacked by teacher educators working on a one-to-one basis with instructors and through small group in-service training programs to improve understanding of trainee problems, to increase skill in instructional procedures, and to show teachers that curriculum adaptations and variations are imperative in teaching the disadvantaged if we are to help them solve their problems and meet their needs.

The course of study guides developed provide a suggested course outline, references, a glossary of trade terms, and other addenda, all of which instructors are encouraged to vary or adjust as required by their local situation and students. These guides, plus handbooks on guidance, basic remedial education and other pertinent subjects, direct the teacher along the overall instructional path, and later serve as a basis for discussion and consideration at an annual week-long in-service training conference where instructors and supervisors discuss their ideas and problems, among them curriculum adaptations.

Sometimes good teachers are asked their prescription for adaptation of course content. But there isn't any. The good teacher merely uses his intelligence and innovative ability in relating the required course content to the trade and the world of the trainee. This, good teachers have been doing over the years, for curriculum adaptation is neither new nor revolutionary.

I should like to cite one curriculum adaptation which we consider important in relation to tailoring the content to the needs of the student. I refer to the varied exit points possible from a training course. For example, in an Office Occupations program, we may train receptionists, typists, file clerks, stenographers, bookkeepers, key punch operators, and so on. Rarely, would any one trainee develop real skill in all these areas, and usually some are completely unable to acquire usable skill in more than one or two areas. So why require each individual to become proficient in all phases of the occupation?

The slow learner may get along with people better than anyone in the class, so train her to be the best possible receptionist. Another trainee who can scarcely spell "cat" may be an excellent copy typist, so develop his manual skills to become the expert figure typist so in demand by many industrial corporations and insurance companies. Yet another student may have great patience, be skilled in math, and show potential in bookkeeping, so pursue this talent. Quite possibly not one of these trainees is able to develop any interest or proficiency in shorthand. Through analysis of each trainee's interests, personal characteristics, and abilities, the interested instructor can assist each in working to his fullest potential and toward the kind of employment for which he is best suited. When the instructor encourages varied emphasis for individual students, as a matter of course, he changes and adapts the curriculum.



If one examines each occupational training program carefully, many exit points, or job variations come to mind. For example, in an Automobile Mechanics program, a few trainees may develop into carburetor, brake, or transmission specialists. Others may find their talents best suited to alignment problems. A few trainees, on the other hand, never develop enough skill to become entry-level mechanics. These students can be guided toward parts department jobs where the auto mechanic's training is both helpful and necessary.

The instructor of each trade soon learns to recognize the various exit or completion points possible from his training program. As a result he becomes adept in making necessary adaptations in program planning.

In the 1968 Amendments, the definition of "vocational education" is broadened to include remedial vocational and technical instruction incident to training programs and guidance and counseling is broadened to include services which facilitate job choices and job placement. We certainly cannot say that only the counselor shall advise and counsel, that only the occupational teacher shall teach shop, and that only the basic-remedial instructor shall teach math and communications. All must correlate their efforts, and so vocational education becomes a meld of occupation training, basic-remedial education, and guidance and counseling services, all inter-related and correlated to make the individual employable. Thus, relevance becomes a major thrust in all aspects of the training program.

Let us examine a remedial math program to cite examples of departure from traditional math instruction. Usually included are the four basics to provide a workable base for most trades. However, to be realistic to the disadvantaged these must be applied specifically to the problems and aspects of a particular occupation. The waitress needs to add the diner's tab and learn to make change. The cook trainee needs to apportion quantity recipes.

In addition to the four basics, the machinist trainee must learn measurements, percentage, and trigonometric applications to cover the fine tolerances and designs of the machining trade. The electronics mechanic student delves into the usage of higher math and complicated electrical formulas without learning the formulas as such. In these ways the remedial math instructor adapts his curriculum to the trade as well as to the needs of the students.

Emphasis here is on usage and application, which are more practical—more relevant—in teaching the disadvantaged than are rules, theories, and formulas. Usage rather than rules and theories can be considered a form of curriculum adaptation, and certainly is a departure from the usual instructional procedures.

We have been talking about a few curriculum adaptations, and we find they are not easy to delineate. Can it be that the curriculum itself is a serious hindrance to the effective teaching of the disadvantaged? Occupational curricula traditionally have been based on a trade analysis with the usual simple to complex arrangement of skills and knowledge, all planned in units to be completed in a prescribed time period. Does this type of plan run afoul of the disadvantaged students' chances of success?

To succeed with the disadvantaged, the curriculum must be person-oriented as well as craft or trade-oriented, with strong emphasis on behavioral objectives, and with stress on understanding the individual after an in-depth study of his needs. Perhaps our need in vocational education is for multi-curricula, as implied earlier in our discussion of several exit points in a training program. Perhaps we even need a curriculum for each student. Thus we could begin with a basic course of study, changing and adapting it to the individual needs of each enrollee. Obviously problems would result, but we have problems at present. Would not the benefits override the problems if each student achieved the behavioral objectives, and the accepted, established levels of skill and knowledge required for employability in some spot suited to his capabilities?

I would suggest that any basic vocational curriculum for the disadvantaged needs to be broadened to include employability training and orientation to the world of work, either through cooperative work programs or through experiences planned to acquaint the student with jobs, people, and the community. In addition, the curriculum should be so planned as to accustom him to a personal growth pattern he can follow for self-improvement throughout life.

In Tennessee, we are trying out some of these ideas in pilot programs on curriculum development. Included are job and career orientation, employability training, cooperative programs, institutional programs providing for individual differences and individual progress, early completion of training and varied exit points, and we are beginning to consider and plan a broad-based curriculum for clusters of jobs. This broad base would cover all students in the early grades possibly beginning with job acquaintance and gradually working toward the goal of at least entry-level employability by the end of the secondary program.

It will be interesting to see how these curriculum adaptations and new concepts develop. We feel that they will successfully project improved training opportunities not only for the disadvantaged but for all students in vocational education.

**CASE STUDY: NEWARK MANPOWER TRAINING SKILLS CENTER**

by

**GEORGE R. QUARLES**

Director, Newark Manpower Training Skills Center, Newark, New Jersey

Presented at the

**NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FOR THE DISADVANTAGED**

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(NOTE: The following Case Study illustrates how various components can successfully be organized and integrated in a program devoted to Vocational Education for the Disadvantaged.)

When asked, "What are you doing at the Newark Manpower Training Skills Center that makes you effective in teaching the disadvantaged that may be of value to the secondary school vocational educator"? my first thoughts turned to:

- a) the philosophy of the Newark Skills Center
- b) the flexibility of the curriculum
- c) counselling and supportive services
- d) trainee involvement in all programs
- e) the selection of the instructors

As a former secondary school vocational educator, it is very easy for me to discern the differences between the operation of the Newark Manpower Training Skills Center and the school system in which I previously worked.

At the Newark Skills Center we felt that the time had come to deal with the "educationally disadvantaged" in a different manner than that of the formal institutions of learning to which both we and those we had to teach had not found too successful.

In June of 1965 the New Jersey State Board of Education adopted a resolution whereby a multi-occupational skills center would be established in Newark. The Division of Vocational Education was given the responsibility of administering the program under the Manpower Development and Training Act.

The site selected was the 70,000 square foot building formerly occupied by the Newark State College. The original program called for the training of 1,280 youth and adults in twenty-four occupations over a two year period. John E. Radvany and I were appointed Director and Assistant Director, respectively.

At its very inception, the Newark Skills Center adopted the philosophy that "Everything must revolve around the Trainee". He is our "star," the focal point of every activity, we are here to serve him. . . and to do so we must involve him.

## PLANNING

The Newark Skills Center is designed specifically for the training of adults with inferior educational backgrounds and/or obsolescent skills. It is not an elementary or secondary school or one on the college level. Its primary intent is to teach new skills in order to make educationally disadvantaged persons immediately employable upon completion of relatively short training periods. And, since the majority of them had not been too successful in



formal institutions of learning, conditions had to be created that would induce them to enter a training program and to remain with it.

The first item of planning, then, was to produce a conducive learning environment. This was accomplished by a complete renovation of the building which had been vacant for more than six years. A massive renovation and remodeling job was undertaken incorporating pleasing-to-the-eye paint, installation of modern lighting fixtures, heating equipment, etc. This place had to have a far different physical appearance than the majority of the inner-city schools and living quarters to which the majority of our trainees had become accustomed.

Inside and out, the premises are maintained in tip-top condition and present a place to which the trainee is proud to come.

## **SKILL TRAINING**

Currently the Newark Skills Center offers training in the following twenty-two occupations, varying from eight to forty-four weeks in length:

Baking	Electrical Appliances	Precision Grinding
Brokerage Clerk	Jewelry Assembler	Radio & TV
Building Service	Keypunch Operator	Salesperson
Building Maintenance	Machine Shop	Tailoring
Clerical Skills	Medical Secretary	Transferer
Cooking	Nurses' Aide	Upholstering
Drafting	Offset Duplicating	Welding
	Practical Nurse	

Trainees, who attend five days a week, seven and one-half hours a day, spend six hours in the "Shop" learning how to perform a skill. Each shop mirrors that particular industry. When possible, real jobs are performed in each of them. The bulk food preparation training programs of our baking and cooking class provide meals for our entire trainee body and staff at nominal prices. The Building Services class and Building Maintenance trainees assist the household staff in the cleaning and maintaining of our premises. Clerical Skills trainees provide assistance to the staff in that field. The Nurses' Aide and Practical Nurse courses include actual training in hospitals. The Offset Duplicating class is a veritable beehive of activity in the graphic arts field.

This means, then, that when employable, the transition from the Skills Center to a job is merely a matter of changing the location, for all the applied methods and equipment found in modern day business and industry are incorporated into each program.

As each Trainee arrives he becomes involved in the work of the class. So involved, in fact, that grudges and dislikes soon disappear. This performance of actual jobs, where the results of one's efforts are meaningful and immediately shown, instills the pride of accomplishment and the desire to learn more—to do an even better job.

## **BASIC EDUCATION**

The one and one-half hour daily Basic Education program of the Newark Manpower Training Skills Center is the outgrowth of three years of research and experimentation. During this period of development, the fundamental philosophy of Basic Education has been to implement a learning experience suited to the abilities and the needs of the individual. It is a careful combination of the two foci: one is trainee-centered; the other is subject-matter centered. Our program is a flexible one in which we strive to achieve maximum education based upon the trainee's ability to learn.

Because of the heterogeneity of our classes, Basic Education is structured to accommodate a wide range of abilities and achievements of individual trainees. The program is initiated with a series of tests, purely diagnostic in nature, to determine the level of learning attained by the trainee at the time of entry into this program. The trainee is then channeled into one of three phases of our Basic Education program.

## **ATTITUDE DEVELOPMENT**

Another factor of paramount importance in the development and structure of the Basic Education program is the creation of desirable attitudes. The majority of our trainees have failed in the "normal" school environment and methods. The result of this failure is a general attitude of antipathy, even hostility, toward basic education. The solution to this psychological problem lies in the removal of the typical "school setting". In doing so, stress is placed upon basic education as it relates directly to an occupation. The skill becomes the avenue of inculcating basic and related knowledge and the "medicinal" basic education becomes palatable when it is an integral ingredient of the desired "tonic"—acquisition of a skill and the commensurate earning power.

This is, however, only a first step in attitude development. The next goal is to evoke from the trainee a feeling that Basic Education is intrinsically desirable. The axiom "nothing succeeds like success" may be a hackneyed expression but it is a true one. Experience has indicated that to many trainees who enjoy initial success, Basic Education becomes a "status symbol" and an end in itself. Many have pursued further learning in vocational and even higher education, once the "failure" attitude has been eradicated and replaced by the desire to learn and achieve.

The two prime considerations, then, are the teaching of essential related knowledge to a heterogenous class and attitude development. The goals are:

1. To develop the ability of trainees to learn through independent study or self instruction.
2. To enable the trainees to utilize reference and source material.
3. To impart problem-solving techniques.
4. To familiarize the trainees with an adequate survey of mechanics and technology.
5. To instill positive attitudes of achievement—how to win.

## **CURRICULUM PLANNING**

Given the proper initial assistance, all instructors plan their courses to meet the trainees' individual needs. However, not until this information is organized and "put onto paper" does the instructor realize the magnitude of his assignment and become aware of the necessary "simple-to-complex" procedures involved in teaching a given occupation. Most important, this program develops a related basic education program in order to provide the most meaningful occupational training possible.

Each course of study includes a detailed outline of subject material, suggested methods of presentation, related basic education coupled with the occupational activities, review of new skills learned, and new information gained. Occupational training and basic education must be coupled in order to make the training program more meaningful. It enables the Occupational and Basic Education Instructors to follow the course of instruction simultaneously and coordinate their activities more effectively.

## **CURRICULUM LABORATORY**

To further assist the basic education program a "Curriculum Laboratory" was set up. The latest audio-visual equipment was purchased and special instructors hired. To this department are sent those trainees below—or above—the norm of the class where remedial—or advanced—individual attention can be given. It is not unusual to find, in a private cubicle, a trainee being taught to write his name while next to him another is learning speed-reading or higher math.

## **HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY**

Special classes are held which prepare trainees to take the High School Equivalency examination given by the local Board of Education. Many leave with this certificate either before or upon completion of the course.

## **ENGLISH AS SECOND LANGUAGE**

Multi-lingual or bi-lingual instructors teach English to foreign-born trainees in classes audio-visually equipped for this purpose.

## **AUDIO-VISUAL DEPARTMENT**

It is an old axiom that "one picture saves a thousand words". This is particularly true in teaching the educationally deprived. To enhance the learning and teaching process an Audio-Visual department was founded with an expert Artist-Technician in charge. It prepares custom-made color slides and transparencies, many incorporating

motion, that graphically depict the internal or external makeup or operation of any object. Closed circuit television equipment, available for use by all programs, was obtained for this department.

## **TEACHERS**

Equally important to whatever success we may have achieved is the selection of our Instructors. Sought for and found men and women with years of experience in a particular field. However, not only was it necessary that they be well qualified craftsmen, but it was mandatory that they have the personality and ability to communicate a skill to the trainee and to relate to him. These same requirements were mandatory for the Basic Education Instructors. Moreover, these had to be able to show how the subject matter was absolutely necessary for satisfactory performance of the skill and to present it in an interesting manner.

It might have been to our advantage that the majority of our Vocational Instructors had never seen the inside of a college where the methods of teaching they would have learned would have not been, in most cases, applicable to the population of the Skills Center. More important, it was felt, was their understanding and empathy—not sympathy—towards another fellow human being.

To know an occupation well, to have many years of work experience in that occupation and to be hired to instruct that occupation is only the beginning for the new instructor at the Newark Manpower Training Skills Center.

To transmit this knowledge and experience to others so that each individual takes away with him as much as possible of what the instructor has to give is a desired end.

We want the instructor to develop a concern for the results of his teaching efforts. We help him develop his own teaching techniques, and provide specific examples and evaluations by which the instructor can measure his efforts.

In our in-service training, we try to create in the instructor an awareness of the problems trainees bring to the classroom, and enable him to cope with these problems in the learning situation. We define the relationship between the teacher, the trainee and the guidance counselor.

## **SUPPORTIVE SERVICES**

Driver education is provided only for those persons enrolled in a course where the possession of a driver's license may be requisite for gaining employment.

Also in operation is a program with the Bureau of Apprenticeship Training whereby trainees are assigned to the Skills Center without occupational designation. For a period of up to six weeks their schedules consist of exposure to various shop activities and the related basic education, while being evaluated for interest and ability. At any time during this trial period they may be assigned to a specific training program, placed in an on-the-job training situation or into full time employment.



Trainees come from various socio-economic backgrounds and ethnic groups: some are welfare recipients or are in rehabilitation programs; some with criminal records; all of different educational levels, ranging in age from sixteen to sixty. Most have personal problems when they arrive; other problems arise as they co-mingle in a class averaging twenty persons. We have a staff of guidance counselors who help them deal with their problems.

The experimental Perception program is one example of the many services performed by this department. The objectives are to determine which students have perceptual problems that inhibit, limit or preclude their functioning in a successful training program and to establish a program to deal with perceptual difficulties where they are present.

It has been known for sometime that great majorities of persons who fail to succeed academically and vocationally do so because of perceptual difficulties. As of late more emphasis has been placed on this disability and methods of dealing with it.

Very simply stated, perception can be visualized as being divided into three parts; (1) the input of stimuli through receptors, (2) the integration of stimuli from receptors to brain, (3) the output of energy from brain to effectors.

## **TRIAL EMPLOYMENT**

The courses vary in length from eight to forty-four weeks. No trainee is required to remain in class the entire length of the course. As soon as one becomes employable he may go out on a job on what is called, "Trial Employment." When this done his allowance ceases but he remains on the class roster. Upon completion, he will receive a diploma and certificate from the Vocational Division of the New Jersey Department of Education.

## **JOB PLACEMENT**

An office of the Division of Employment Security is located at the Skills Center to assist its main office in both recruiting and job placement. Its work is made much lighter, however, by the pride, sincerity and enthusiasm of each of the vocational instructors employed by the Center.

Men and women, with years of experience in a craft, they keep in constant touch with the industry. And so interested do they become in each of their trainees that they do not consider their work completed until they personally place as many as possible in a well paying job. Moreover, through months of class association they know each trainee's potential and consequently are able to "fit the trainee to the job".

## **ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

Consisting of experts of business and industry, they also assist in job placement. Formed originally for their knowledge of the proper equipment, tools and methods for each program, they are often called upon, or volunteer

their services to give up-to-date information.

The most consistent and exemplary of these is that of our Drafting and Radio-TV technical Committee. For more than eighteen months, twelve to fifteen members of the Essex County Society of Professional Engineers have been meeting monthly at the Skills Center to provide the above services. And, for a period of months, one member of the Committee, each week, gave up time from his occupation to lecture the class in a specific phase of drafting or to give individual attention to a trainee.

An open end enrollment policy, or "slot" system exists at the Skills Center. At any time a class falls below its pre-determined number of trainees—usually twenty—new applicants will be accepted. These will remain beyond the completion date of the original group if necessary in order to meet the course objective. To alleviate the increased burden this policy places on the vocational instructor, the most proficient and personable trainee in the class has been employed—in some courses—as an Assistant to the Instructor. His or her job is to teach the elementary fundamentals of the course to late-comers as well as to instruct the Pre-Vocational trainees who enter the class.

I have attempted to spell out most of the salient features we have incorporated over the three and one-half years of our existence. In summary, they are:

1. The philosophy that "Everything must revolve around the Trainee".
2. A physical environment to which they are proud to come.
3. An instructional, vocational and basic education program geared to each trainee's pace.
4. The careful selection and training of staff and instructors.

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION TEACHERS  
OF THE DISADVANTAGED**

by  
**DR. LAWRENCE REDDICK**, Coordinator  
Opportunities Industrialization Centers, Philadelphia, Pa.

Presented at the  
**NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FOR THE DISADVANTAGED**

Atlantic City, New Jersey

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Predictably, the OIC approach to the selection, orientation and further development of its instructors conforms to the overall OIC system of job-training. Please forgive me for using the word "system" but we do feel that our theories and practices have been tried out under such a variety of circumstances and conditions that now we are justified in systematizing what we have attempted and extracting from it what has worked well for us.

As you probably know, from the original Opportunities Industrialization Center in Philadelphia, founded in 1964, more than 60 others have been established throughout the nation. These range geographically from Boston to Jacksonville to Dallas to Seattle. Some of these operations are in metropolitan areas such as New York and Chicago, others in middle-sized or small cities and a few are located in townships that serve as economic capitals for several surrounding counties.

Our clientele, though largely black, includes also Appalachian Whites as in Roanoke, American Indians as in Oklahoma City, Puerto Ricans as in Philadelphia and Mexican Americans as in Phoenix, Arizona. There is a public relations rumor that we have a couple of displaced Eskimos in our Seattle OIC but the story still lacks confirmation.

After some planning and considerable trial and error, we believe that now we are able, with some confidence, to serve the needs of an unemployed fellow citizen, from the time he walks off the streets into an OIC station, until he is finally placed on a good-paying job in industry. Finally, we know today a little better how best to encourage the individual's will to self-help and, at the same time, generate support for his efforts from the total community, the world of organized business and labor, and the federal government.

Moreover, we have learned something about the best way to involve not only the individual himself but his immediate neighborhood in his rehabilitation.

And so, these days, we are developing a manual that may bear the title: "The OIC System of Job Training." We hope that it will include the latest and the best thought on the subject but we remember enough history to realize that by the time we get it into print, others will come along with newer insights and techniques that will immediately make our innovations old-fashioned. So, what we attempt to say today, next year this time may be passe. But such is the kind of life we lead these days in the second half of the twentieth century.

## THE IDEAL OIC INSTRUCTOR

Ideally, an OIC instructor should have had, when he comes to us (1) a good general college education, (2) two years of specialization in his particular area of instruction and (3) two years of experience in working with economically disadvantaged adults—and with whom he identifies (4) personally, he should himself be psychologically secure.

To state it another way, the ideal OIC instructor should have competence in his subject area, including familiarity with modern methods of instruction, and at the same time, should be able to communicate with and relate to the type of human being that he is likely to encounter in an OIC.

We all know that there are not too many instructors of this ideal type who are presently floating about the



country. Like you, we take the best that we can get—and then we seek to orient, recondition and at times train those instructors that get through our screen. Some likely sources are the Teachers Corps, Peace Corps and Vista.

A large share of our instructors have had experience as public school or college teachers. This kind of background has its minuses as well as its pluses. We try to avoid elementary school teachers who have become firmly habituated to talking to little children. Theirs is a hard pattern to change. Our trainees, if anything, are adults and often are more adult about certain aspects of life than are many teachers.

One of our chief consultants, Dr. Lewis Wade Jones, has stated this beautifully:

“Teachers with experience in elementary school teaching may have the advantage of a simple enough vocabulary to communicate with disadvantaged adults without being able to meet the fact of adulthood of learners in their classes. Teachers with secondary school or college teaching experience may have more success in relating to adult learners while having difficulty with vocabulary and conceptual communication.”

We also tend to avoid an ex-college professor who uses sarcasm to stimulate his affluent undergraduates. We are told that one of Harvard's great economists is quite effective with his jibes and barbs in his classes there; but he would hardly succeed at OIC for our trainees cannot take such continual ribbing. They require a positive, optimistic, encouraging instructor.

## TRAINING THE OIC INSTRUCTOR

So, if we get a prospective OIC instructor, who is himself reasonably secure, and who does not appear to be rigid in his attitude and at the same time is competent within his subject area, we work with him along the following lines:

First, we seek to help him learn about and understand the type of person that we seek to train. Secondly, we attempt to familiarize the instructor with the special features of our training program. Thirdly, we demonstrate the necessity of close cooperation between instruction, counseling and job placement. For each of these imperatives we “show and tell,” provide guidelines and helpful materials.

Let us look at each of these three efforts for a few moments.

Our new instructor would need to know about the human beings that he is likely to encounter in his classes and shops.

First, he should realize that the trainee sitting before him might not be sure that he wants to be there. We have some recruits who are “walk-ins.” Under their own steam, they walk across the threshold of an intake center. But we also have some “pull-ins” or “drag-ins,” those that our recruiters have gone out and persuaded to give OIC a try. At times a recruiter actually has to accompany his client on his first trip to OIC. Otherwise, by himself, the jobless man might not make it in.

Secondly, our instructor will need to be aware of the probability that among the enrollees of his class, there may be some who have in the past experienced or are presently experiencing one of more of an array of such frustrating

influences as:

- (1) Substandard Housing in a substandard area.
- (2) A "broken" home—without mother or father or probably with a wayward daughter or wife.
- (3) Illness or need for eye and teeth care.
- (4) Hunger, malnutrition or some other diet deficiency.
- (5) Unpaid debts or even garnishment.
- (6) Encounters with police or street molesters.
- (7) A police record that haunts him every time he tries for credit or a job.
- (8) Alcoholism or drug addition.
- (9) Recent loss of job.
- (10) Rage for the way "the system," "the establishment," or "whitey" has, in his eyes, abused him.
- (11) Has a style of living—including language, dress and humor—that is far removed from that of middle-class conventional behavior.
- (12) A recent disappointment in friendship or romance.

In a word, our instructor may face reluctant trainees, who may be distracted by their own stream of consciousness, reflecting the condition of their lives. Many of them may be more familiar with defeat than with victory or success in terms of their personal and social relations. As some of them say, "just give me a little time to get myself together."

To help such instructors, we provide written and oral hints, role-playing situations and the testimony of our more experienced staff members. Flexibility is a great quality in these inter-personal relations with trainees. A narrow moralistic attitude would get you nowhere. A non-judgmental approach might be the beginning of identification. A cardinal principle is that trainees should always be treated as adults. Cultural class differences should be minimized. For example, the instructor's style of dress—if it is expensive and conspicuously beyond the reach of his trainees—could be a barrier to mutual identification. A high flown speech style, too might widen the chasm between trainee and instructor. On the contrary, an instructor can overdo "coming down to their level," "creating doubt about his sincerity or self-respect. The happy mean, here as elsewhere, is hard to come by.

One OIC directive says:

"Empirically, it has been found that the OIC trainee brings many social and personal inhibitions to the program. There is apprehension that his teachers and counselors will look down upon him because he has failed to make social and economic progress; there is a fear that his manner of speech and dress may be laughed at by his fellow students, as well as OIC staff members; there is the anxiety that perhaps his close friends, who are not in OIC, may reject him

once he takes a giant step outside his cultural surroundings; there exists the doubt of being able to relate successfully to the dominant culture.

“Needless to say, any combination of the above serves only to impede the potential progress of the OIC trainee. An effort to combat many of these self-defeating attitudes places heavy responsibilities upon the instructor. OIC instructors must possess or acquire qualities beyond those of regular teachers. Besides having a degree of experience, the instructor must have fortitude, patience, understanding, creativity, the ability and desire to learn and implement the OIC spirit. It is the confrontation between the uniqueness of OIC trainees’ life-style experiences and the assumption that the OIC instructor can cope successfully with these experiences, that makes OIC training a challenge.”

We seek to indoctrinate our instructors, as with all of our new staff members, in what we call the OIC point of view. Some of it may sound a little “corny” but it seems to work.

### OIC POINT OF VIEW

Everything that OIC does should reflect its basic philosophy. This is a truism that is implicit in all of the oral and written OIC “literature.” However, in dealing with something that is at once a spirit, an attitude, “a way of looking at things,” a pattern of behavior, it is of course, difficult to state it exactly and comprehensively. Whole books could be written about it and still leave much unsaid. Some true believers insist that one has to “feel” OIC in his bones before he can enter into its deeper meanings. Let us, for the moment, content ourselves with listing a few of the elementary OIC articles of faith and action:

1. “OIC believes in man, his unlimited possibilities for good; his improvability; his right to a good life regardless of his color, creed, family background or any circumstance or misfortune of life.
2. “OIC holds that man in his infinite variety should be treated with respect—his dignity is not to be violated because of his appearance, personal history, or present circumstances.
3. “OIC, insists that its trainees should be treated as the adults they are; that everyone can learn, though at different speeds and under differing conditions; that it is the obligation of OIC personnel to assist the learner in finding and adjusting to his most favorable learning environment.
4. “OIC, it should be realized, is also the outgrowth of the Civil Rights Movement; that there probably would have been no OIC without this struggle for human dignity and equal opportunity. Thus OIC is also viewed as a positive, constructive and tangible phase of the Rights Movement.
5. “OIC considers itself part of the war on poverty and that its services are most available to the poor, the unemployed, the defeated and the socially rejected; that to the extent that OIC establishes rapport with the victims of poverty and renders real assistance to them, to that extent does OIC accomplish its mission.
6. “OIC realizes that men differ widely in their social and cultural traits and that no set of these

characteristics can be adjudged inherently 'superior' or 'inferior.'

7. "And yet, the world of work does have rules and practices that must be understood by those who would succeed in this realm."

Secondly, the instructor will find a great many answers to his classroom questions within the OIC training program itself. Structurally, it is of two parts—Feeder and Skills. No examination or achievement record is required for entrance into OIC. Accordingly, those who come bring with themselves a wide range of educational experience and inexperience. Thus, the recruit's interests, aptitudes and skills are cooperatively evaluated by himself and OIC, and the educational program that is developed therefrom is designed to take him from wherever he is to the point where he can perform effectively on a desirable and good-paying job.

All OIC trainees thus must go through the Feeder before going through Skills training. The time spent in Feeder may vary from a couple of weeks to several months, depending upon the pre-vocational needs of the trainees. The rationale for the Feeder is as follows:

### WHY A FEEDER?

The Feeder is one of the unique features of OIC. Like other manpower training programs, the Feeder is pre-vocational in that it prepares its enrollees for the training in specific skills that will come to them a little later. In fact, Feeder gets its name because it feeds its products (trainees) into skills training.

The OIC philosophy holds that before we can produce a good skilled workman, we must first help produce a good man. Thus, the trainee must believe in his own worth and possibilities and must view his future with reasonable optimism and social awareness. The Feeder concept is central to the whole of the OIC program that it can be said that without Feeder there is no true OIC.

More specifically, OIC Feeder integrates the usual pre-vocational training with what is generally known as "basic Education" and for want of a better term, what we call psychological motivation. We have found that all of these elements are necessary to effective job preparation, for any number of persons are denied positions or lose them not because they lack the required vocational skills; rather, because their patterns of speech, dress, sense of time and general behavior make them unsuited to the world of work. Accordingly, for the disadvantaged and unmotivated person, the Feeder becomes the beginning point for all else that follows under the label of technical instruction."

To overcome the impact of the dominant culture on ethnic minorities, we offer Minority History in the Feeder. This is designed to give each trainee, whatever his ethnic identification, a sense of belonging to a group that has helped build the American nation. Indirectly, this contradicts the popular and generally unfavorable stereotypes of the American Indian, Mexican-, Puerto Rican- and Oriental-American, Appalachian White and, above all, the Afro-American.

We tell the trainee of achievements that the usual history books leave out. We tell of men of his group who have become prominent and successful—many arising out of modest circumstances. We attempt to give him a positive attitude toward the cultural traditions of his own group. We try to show him that this nation indeed is a composite of the contributions of peoples from many lands and conditions and that we all have talents and rights and responsibilities. Minority History seems to work like magic and is possibly our most effective instrument in building



a favorable self-image for our trainee.

Another phase of the Feeder program is orientation of the trainee to the world of work. In this we go into appropriate dress and grooming for the job; personal hygiene; how to behave in an interview; how to take and pass tests; and how to get along with fellow employees and employers.

The final phase of Feeder is more strictly speaking pre-vocational in the sense that the trainee is helped to learn about what he will need to know in the specific skill of his choice. He explores, for example, such tool subjects as blue print reading and familiarity with the basic tools and shop practices of the marketable skill he has in view.

Cooperation is essential whenever problems of the trainee interfere with his progress in his training—and when such problems are beyond the ken of the instructor, such as:

- (1) excessive absences or dropping out;
- (2) need of emergency funds for child care or transportation;
- (3) difficulties between instructor and trainee;
- (4) domestic affairs that interfere with trainees, class or shop work;
- (5) need for referral services to other community resources for psychiatric and medical attention.

Thus, Feeder is a large part of OIC. When its work is well done, its product is a self-confident man who is aware of himself as a person and aware of his responsibilities as well as his rights. He is attuned to the discipline of time and ready to learn a skill for which he has the aptitude and for which he has had the preliminary preparation.

Many industries take OIC trainees as they complete their Feeder work, preferring to give specific skills training in the company shop. Generally the OIC Feeder graduates move on into an OIC Skills Center.

## TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION

Our problems in our skills centers are similar to those in our Feeder; but there are a few special twists. For example, our skills instructors often feel that our concern with motivation and psychological conditioning is overdone. They want to plunge immediately into the technical instruction and stick exclusively to that. At times they look away—out of the window—when we remind them of characteristics of our trainees that require special attention.

Most of our vocational educational instructors come to us from the public high schools or from industry. The former tend to expect a high academic qualification than most of our trainees possess. We have to convince new instructors that some of these qualifications are unnecessary to the learning of the skill in question or that a slower rate of progress may be, nonetheless, progress!

Moreover, ex-public school trade teachers cannot understand the extent to which we go out and “drag in” trainees. They say that if the training is in a public place, if it is free, this should be sufficient attraction for anybody who has real self interest. Many a time we have had to point out for such an instructor that some of the best of his shop enrollees would not be there but by grace of hard-sell recruiters.

Instructors who have worked in industries that have more applicants than available jobs are often impatient and

matter-of-fact. "Unsympathetic" is the tag our trainees place on such shop men. Such ex-industrial instructors are accustomed to "weeding out" the so-called unfit. To them a person either can do or he can't; will do or he won't. He has three strikes at the ball and if he misses all three, he's out and that's that! They say that we of OIC "nurse along" our weak and slow ones. This is true; we do. These are our clients and serving them is our "business."

Despite this initial skepticism of our supportive services, we usually win commitment from our skills instructors as well as those from Feeder at one or another level of our scheme for staff development. This program is also designed, on the one hand, to provide a balance for those who know their craft but know little of teaching techniques and, on the other hand, those who know how to teach but somehow have failed to keep up with the changing technology of industry.

## STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Accordingly, our hope is that we can make these and other needed corrections by means of (1) pre-service and inservice staff development seminars in Philadelphia; (2) onsite sessions at the local level and/or (3) a three months intensive training session at our new Managerial Training School at Philadelphia.

First, we prefer pre-service seminars for all new OIC instructors. Ideally, such newcomers should come to Philadelphia for a week or two, prior to beginning their work at a local OIC. Here they should see how the Philadelphia Prototype "does it," and receive "expert" guidance from the specialists on the staffs of the OIC Institute and the Extension Services. Both theory and practice may be explored; techniques and materials examined; and the OIC point of view rehearsed and illustrated.

One week in Philadelphia, of course, goes very quickly; even so, it is difficult to get most instructors, especially the director of training, to Philadelphia prior to their beginning work at the local OIC. We have more luck on this when a new OIC is first starting up. For ever so often an instructor is needed to meet a class that has already formed or he is replacing an instructor who for some reason has had to give up a class that had been going for some time.

The in-service seminar in Philadelphia is much like the pre-service seminar but with the former the emphasis is upon re-freshing and up-dating techniques, skills and materials.

We are able to substitute an on-site training session for an OIC that does not seem to find it possible to spare its instructors (or other staff members) to come to Philadelphia. This is less effective than participant-observation of the Prototype and with the full staff and facilities of the Institute and Extension Services at hand. Even so, a team of specialists from Philadelphia often can do a fairly good job of staff development on the premises of a local OIC.

We learned a lot from the summer-long institute for skills instructors that was held in 1966 at San Jose State College, California, by grace of a special grant from HEW.

San Jose College has published a detailed account of its findings. It is entitled **Summer Program for Up-Dating the Technical Competency of Teachers of Industrial Subjects**. Copies are available from the College. We at OIC have adopted and adapted much of their experience for our own national staff development program.

Both our trainees and our instructors may be described as job-anxious. They want to get the training done as quickly as possible. We take all of the effective short cuts. Meanwhile, our people want to be sure that the training

they receive at OIC is in accordance with the job that they are to get in industry. We all know how easy it is for instruction to get out of step with the realities of the actual job.

To keep the OIC shop in step with our employers, we set up technical advisory committees for each skill or cluster of skills. The instructors and plant supervisors thus have a channel for the exchange of view and a forum for discussing new materials, new methods and new machines as they come along. It is essential that our instructors keep in close touch with the industry in which our "graduates" will be working. However, it takes a great deal of doing to keep these technical advisory committees active; but the results justify the effort.

Perhaps our crowning mechanism to upgrade the staffs of our OIC locals, including instructors, is our Managerial Training School.

We have begun with staff development for executive directors and their deputies and will in time similarly train chief counselors, chief instructors, chief recruiters, job developers and other key staff personnel.

The Managerial Training School is located in Philadelphia and at present is able to enroll about two dozen persons per class. These selectees are nominated by the local OICs, the OIC Institute and our Extension Services. The nominees are screened for eligibility by the staff of the Managerial Training School. Those finally chosen are subsidized so that their income will match their current salary rate with their OIC. We also provide round trip transportation from the home base to Philadelphia. This subsistence support enables our enrollees to devote full time for twelve weeks to intensive training. The curriculum designed by OIC is given strong academic support by such universities as Temple and the Wharton School of Finance. The local OIC executives, who are now undergoing training, are receiving instruction in such areas as General Management, Financial Management, Manpower, Urban Sociology (so that they may better understand their communities), Minority History (so that they may better appreciate the potential of their trainees), and OIC History and Theory. This instruction is matched by a practicum, that is by six, successive, supervised field experiences in the Philadelphia Prototype that will allow participant-observation of the most important phases of an OIC operation.

At our Managerial School, the OIC instructors, of course, would not get General Management and Financial Management but they would get the Urban Sociology, the Minority History, the OIC History and Theory. Most of all, they would receive the theory and practice of OIC Instruction.

Thus, we now have the most systematic and sustained staff development program that we have ever attempted. We feel that this is necessary, if OIC is to be a permanent and significant part of the manpower training effort of the nation. It is true that we have widened our scope and sharpened our tools. Even so, we appeal to you for suggestion and recommendation, for today we all need to be more creative and comprehensive than we have ever been.

**COUNSELING AND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES  
IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FOR THE DISADVANTAGED**

by

**RICHARD GREENFIELD**

**Job Counseling Center, Board of Education, New York City**

**Presented at the  
NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FOR THE DISADVANTAGED  
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I've tried, in this paper, to describe the work of the counselor in a vocational setting which can effectively meet the needs of disadvantaged youth. I've also attempted to suggest innovations involving in a somewhat broader role for the counselor, which are a result of my own experience in manpower programs over the last six years.

Since the target population to be considered at this conference is characterized as disadvantaged, a comment is in order.

It seems to me that what has come to be seen by some as ineffectiveness in serving black students, was always present in the schools only it never was as critical as today because the non-ghetto kids were often able to get help from other sources, such as the family and friends of the family, and generally made their way through the educational experience. We counselors, possibly more than other educators, were like doctors who happened to be present when a large number of their patients made spontaneous recoveries. Many of us believed that it was our counseling ministrations which were important to their progress.

Today our efforts are with youth who have a different set of experiences, who do not make these spontaneous recoveries. We are now questioning the older techniques. Counselors whose training was likely never even adequate to serve middle-class kids are searching for new ways of being effective. Counselor educators at many universities are reassessing the course content in their pupil personnel programs. They are well aware of the complaint of newly-appointed counselors about the inadequacy and irrelevancy of their training. What is just as interesting, however, is the response of many of the para-professionals who have been offering counseling service in a variety of anti-poverty projects. In a recent request for a staff-training program made by such a group, the demand was for a strictly lecture program beginning with one on the contributions of Freud, Jung and Adler. In a publication of the New Careers Development Center of New York University, a Project Director stated . . . "In my work with aides I have moved from believing that all we needed to do was free aides to use their native sensitivity and common sense, to my present view of their needing some more disciplined formalized educational program and theoretical framework to augment their considerable natural abilities—and aides are the first to request this additional instruction. Just how to do this effectively, while preserving the unique qualities that make them effective aides and differentiates them from social workers, is mind boggling." The tentative conclusion might be that to be successful with the population we serve, one needs both theory and soul.

## NEEDS OF THE DISADVANTAGED

Possibly the most important need of a disadvantaged youth which can be met by a counseling program is the need to have one individual who can help him tolerate the impersonality of institutional programs. Whether he is perceived as an agent, an ombudsman, or an advocate, his goal will be to help the individual negotiate the system.

In any program that is designed to use the counseling process effectively the counselor's first and major function is to develop a unique relationship with each individual so that the individual can get maximum benefit from the program. In other words, the counselor makes the program accessible to the youth by mediating between the two. He reduces the resistance on the part of the youth to the demand for behavioral change implicit in the program design. He also feeds to the staff of the program the youth's perception of what is happening, which may be causing additional resistance to change.

It is through a developing relationship with the counselor that the student explores his need to change his behavior. For example, a young girl might feel free to discuss her difficulty with reading. The counselor would do well to begin by focusing on her previous attempts to overcome this deficiency. Such a statement as, "You must have spent a lot of effort in covering up your difficulty in reading," can lead to a discussion of all the tricks, dodges, and defenses she has had to use in order to get by. The counselor can then agree that learning to read at the girl's stage of life is a difficult task but a better option than avoiding situations that call for reading. He then moves her into a remedial reading program. This is an example of the counselor's making the program accessible to what the young person wants to accomplish. However, later in his work with the girl he might discover that she has stopped going to the remedial program. In her discussions with him he learns that she is embarrassed because of the great amount of oral reading required by an inexperienced remedial teacher. The counselor feeds this information to the teacher so that she can modify her approach. He can also explore with the girl appropriate ways of handling this situation. Possibly he would also assign the girl to a tutor. The aim of this action would be to encourage the young person to continue in her efforts to improve her reading. This brief example illustrates the process of mediating between the young person and the program.

Disadvantaged kids do not accept counseling as many counselors seem to want to practice it. They are more action-oriented. They are probably less able to tolerate the discomfort of unmet needs. Therefore to be able to function effectively the counselor must be seen by the youth as a "helping person." The help must come before a deeper relationship of trust can develop. This is not to deny the need to develop rapport. However, the counseling techniques communicating respect and showing warmth are suspect to the youth until the counselor proves he can deliver on the promises implicit in his approach.

The coping devices of disadvantaged youths are generally sufficiently developed to present a hazard to any counselor—the hazard of blocked communication. These youths have their own preconceptions of what a counselor expects of them. For example, if they are coming in for service like a "part-time job," they will be sensitive to the cues thrown out to them by the staff on the role they have to play to get the service.

For it is probably safe to say that few young people come in to be counselled. The unspoken question in a youth's mind might be, "What do I have to do to get the job?" If a counselor's pet theory is that minority youths are disadvantaged by racial prejudice, he will probably hear from the youth some instances of injustice to which he has been subjected. If a counselor is strongly oriented to personal-social counseling, he will probably evoke from the young person some details about his intolerable home situation. If a counselor holds that formal schooling or training is the only key to success, he will probably hear the youth say he wants desperately to remain in school.

An attitude that many youths bring with them is plain fear. Many of them have had painful experiences with agencies and schools and they have no way of knowing that this experience will be any different. A subdued, shy, or apologetic youngster is easier to work with, and the counselor may maintain the kid's air of tractability at the expense of reinforcing his qualms and fears.

Once aware of what he can anticipate, the counselor has the task of projecting an image of himself and the program that is both true and helpful. When the projection is good, it tends to communicate two ideas: an acceptance of the youth as he is, and a recognition of his basic needs.

Since little effective counseling can take place unless the counselor is perceived as a helping person, the help he offers must be real and immediate. This is an outgrowth of my experience with about fifty counselors and eight thousand young people in a five-year period. The most significant counseling took place after the perceived needs of the young person coming for service were met.

If this is true, then any program which renders the counselor impotent within the power structure of the school or project is doomed to failure in terms of counseling that significantly helps individuals modify behavior and attitudes and make increasingly more mature decisions.

Joseph Samlet of the Veterans Administration makes a somewhat similar point with greater eloquence in stating . . . "The problem lies not only in identifying client needs in their relationship to work satisfactions but—and the real complexity may be right here—in estimating strength of need, i.e., how great the push is. Here Maslow's idea of the unfolding of needs in hierarchical order, of the non-appearance of high needs unless and until lower-order needs are satisfied, is quite important. The satisfaction of a given need, in other words, is much more than that; it is the condition for bringing the other needs into being. This is the counselor's singular contribution, not usually seen as such: to help the client identify and satisfy needs at a particular level, thereby enabling higher-stage needs to emerge."

For organization's sake, I think much of the work of the counselor can be grouped under three major headings:

Orientation functions, Integrative functions and Articulatory functions.

It would be useful to very briefly state the desired outcomes of each of the three functions before taking them one at a time in describing appropriate activities and the needs they meet.

An orientation is successful if the youth knows what the total program has to offer and how it can be of help to him.

The integrative function is successful if the youth can make sense out of a variety of experiences the institution is providing.

The articulation function is successful if the promise to the youth implicit in the program design enables him to successfully negotiate the transition to the next stage of work, training, or continued schooling with the help of the counselor.

## ORIENTATION

Somehow we've managed in the past to survive with paper programs as we gave lip-service to the need to provide orientation and follow-up. The point is that the successful implementation of such programs can determine the holding power and thus the possibility of a successful vocational experience for the disadvantaged.

The goal of an orientation program is to assist the youth to evaluate his present situation, understand the choices available and the relative value of each choice in his moving towards a tentative goal he has selected. Inherent in a successful orientation program is an optimistic view of his ability to achieve his goal by providing the institutional organization which can assist him.

The following specific suggestions regarding counseling practices in organizing an orientation program are valuable for all youth but critical for those who do not have a frame of reference for the normal sequence of events in vocational training.



Much of the orientation to the program can be done in a group setting. Recent program designs have included a two-week period run by the guidance staff completely for the orientation of new trainees. Within these 50 hours a number of activities are planned for—a medical exam, preparation for and interpretation of a simple test battery, meeting with other trainees who are near completion of the program and some who may be graduated and working, meeting with teachers of various subjects who give short demonstration lessons so that the trainee has some realistic level of expectation of what the training experiences entail. Meeting employers or personnel people describing what industry expects, can be helpful. All during this period the class becomes, in a counseling sense, a group, under the leadership of a counselor and daily group counseling session of one or more hours are included.

In schools serving predominantly a disadvantaged population some provision must be made for the large number of students who transfer in and out throughout the year.

The following are some specific suggestions about counselor practices when the orientation period is done on an individual basis.

The counselor should avoid a formal, clinical approach. Generally his office door should remain open. There should be a noise level in the background—possibly a radio playing softly. There should be an air of purposeful activity in the office. The counselor should try to see himself through the eyes of those he wishes to serve—what will turn them on?

The need to be treated as a separate individual, while felt by all youth, is likely a more critical need in the disadvantaged who can be “turned off” much more easily. For that reason it is generally a good idea for the counselor to walk out and greet the youth in the reception area rather than to have someone bring him in. If it is appropriate, they can walk around the school and look at the various rooms and staff. This gives the counselor a chance to describe in simple terms what is done. By the time they return to the desk they have already shared an experience about which the youth may have questions. What is strongly urged here is the avoidance of traditional institutional approaches. Counselors often complain about the inability to engage in “real counseling” with a disadvantaged population. Attempts to move into sensitive areas early in the relationship are often met with silence or hostility. Some otherwise well-prepared counselors fall back on such “copouts” as “the kids are not verbal—they’re too apathetic . . . the structure of the program doesn’t allow counseling.”

As stated before, the initial goal of the counselor is to become the involved agent of the youth within the establishment. The counselor has to earn the right to counsel him. His approach should be simple and straightforward. He should be saying in effect: here is the program; how can it help you in achieving your goals? The approach must be planned so that the information on which the youth and counselor can act is accurate and complete.

One of the practices in an orientation program which can reduce the resistance to learning caused by a history of school failure is a three-way interview between the youth, his counselor and a teacher. For example, if the youth needs remedial instruction in reading, the counselor can help him discuss his past difficulties with his English teacher. The teacher can describe how other youths have handled this problem in his classroom. A kind of contractual relationship can come out of this which meets the youth’s need for structure, limits and clearly stated objectives. The individual contact between the new student and the teacher with his counselor’s support, is not as critical for middle-class youth as it is for those with a negative attitude towards an impersonal school situation. The orientation program should initiate the longer-term process of self-evaluation. However, counselors ought to be aware of the negative attitudes of disadvantaged youth towards tests. The following from a report on projects serving the disadvantaged, is on trainee response to testing.



"Many trainees refused to finish the test battery.

Testing during intake interfered with the establishment of rapport in the group counseling.

Of 136 scheduled for testing, only 85 showed up.

There was a large "no-show" rate for the regularly scheduled GATB testing on the week following intake.

Of 148 scheduled for the GTB, 58 showed up.

Most of those scheduled for testing on the regular testing day failed to show up.

The trainees resisted the MMPI."

A great number of youths dropped out of the program during the intake phase, which included extensive psychological evaluation and a psychiatric interview. In a follow-up study, some trainees described the depth interviews as insulting, silly, irrelevant, or offensive and intrusive.

The youth resisted going to vocational rehabilitation for testing, because they did not define themselves as sick or requiring rehabilitation.

In general, the simple rules regarding testing the disadvantaged are: it should be done at choice points, around specific questions, and be part of the larger program of self-evaluation. If the choice available to a youth is among programs A,B, or C, the only useful testing would be that which helped the youth and counselor discriminate from among A,B, and C. A uniform testing program that assumes options which in fact do not exist, should be avoided. Specific questions like cut-off scores for eligibility for certain programs can be discussed and test-taking techniques can be taught.

Avoidance of the most destructive aspect of the use of standardized tests (eliminating youth from trying out a program) is illustrated by the approach of a counselor I supervised at an evening center.

The youth told the counselor he wanted to be a doctor. He was a 17 year old drop-out and reading on the fifth grade level. The counselor asked if the youth knew the educational requirements. "Yes," said the youth, "a college graduation."

"So your present problem is getting a high-school diploma," said the counselor and he went on to explain that the youth needed an eighth-grade reading score to get into the high-school equivalency class. Was he interested in a reading program which would bring up his score to gain him admission into the high-school equivalency program? The youth was walked down the hall and introduced to the reading specialist.

There is no testing program specifically suitable to disadvantaged youth. The evidence appears to be that when the usefulness of a test can be demonstrated to the youth, in terms they can accept as useful, the resistance to tests can be overcome.

## INTEGRATIVE

In the division of the total counseling program into three main functions, the goal for the integrative one was to

help the youth make sense out of the variety of experiences which occur both in and out of school. The needs to be met by this integrative experience can be inferred from a report which included a description of the characteristics of disadvantaged youth in experimental and demonstration programs.

The report states that:

In many enrollees, learning has been and will continue to be hampered by living conditions, personal problems, and negative attitudes toward a "school" situation.

Many enrollees will be silent and uncommunicative.

Many enrollees will possess a high degree of articulation in the special jargon of a sub-culture.

Many enrollees will have an inadequate understanding of themselves and how to get along with others.

Many will have to learn to weigh the pros and cons of an action before taking it.

The vehicle for this integrative experience could be a program of structured group counseling.

The attitudes regarding group counseling (in fact, toward most counseling) as expressed by vocational educators probably ranged from neutral to hostile in the early days of the Manpower programs where this style of structured group counseling was developed. However, pending more research evidence, I'd like to believe that group counseling has contributed to the holding power of youth-serving projects.

At any rate it was gratifying to hear a recent convert describe the group counseling component as the cement that holds the program components together. Possibly by describing some general operating principles of this kind of group counseling we can see how it meets the needs that are implicit in the characteristics of the youth it seeks to help.

Each session requires prior thought on the part of the counselor regarding the nature of the specific goals that he hopes the group will attain as a result of the session. These should be behavioral goals and goals that are measurable. For example, one could be the development of punctuality and good attendance on the part of the students at the work site if the school has a cooperative education program.

The counselor's plan should at all times make provision for the group's planning its own agenda and should never be so rigid as to ignore what the group sees as relevant for that session. The counselor can plan broadly in terms of those problem areas that have repeatedly been brought up by previous groups of adolescents. For example, with the same group of cooperative education students, how far can a boss go in giving you orders? How can I handle anger with a fellow employee or the boss? What kind of behavior do most bosses expect from their employees? Does behaving in accordance with the boss' expectations damage my self-respect?

Closely related to the need to focus on behavior is the need to concentrate on the "what" rather than the "why." Too often groups get involved in dealing almost exclusively with the "whys" and use them as a kind of group "copout" for effecting significant behavioral change. The counselor should help the group examine its behavior in terms of rationality and effectiveness in reaching a goal desired by the group or an individual in the group. The counselor or a group member should pinpoint behavior that is self-defeating, i.e., irrational behavior that prevents a person from attaining his goals. He should question and probe the group's reasons for acting in a self-defeating

manner and should challenge or confront the rationality of the reasons given. Where possible, he should verbalize the irrational ideas that might underlie the group's ineffectual behavior.

The group, or the individual within the group, must make a conscious decision to change behavior. It is not enough for the counselor to indicate what change is necessary. It is essential that the group (or the individual) also make an evaluation of any behavioral change.

After the group or individual within the group has made a commitment for changing behavior as a result of dissatisfaction with past behavior, the counselor and the group together work out a plan of action. Whatever the plan is, it must deal with concrete behavior and must be one that is "reality oriented," and that is sufficiently cut down in size to enable the individual or group to handle it successfully. For example if the group were dealing with a problem within a school situation which required that the counselees do homework, the first stage of the plan might call for them to do 10 to 15 minutes of homework per night for one week. The amount would be increased on a regular basis. In this way, the counselor will create small gradients of improvement.

Again, after the plan has been formulated, the counselor might develop a 'contract' with the individual or group, representing a commitment or an agreement to carry out the plan.

Using this behavioral approach to group counseling to provide an integrating experience, both developmental problems and crisis problems can be handled. In addition, feedback from these sessions can alert the staff to the need for re-assessing program effectiveness.

## ARTICULATION

The goal of an articulation program is to provide a smooth transition for the youth into his next vocational or educational experience. The critical unmet need for disadvantaged youth is the need for support during the initial period of adjustment to a new situation. Schools expend three years of effort in preparing a youth for employment. However, after the graduation exercises in June, they often close down school for the summer. Thus, the youth must seek other agencies for the support he needs during the first weeks on the job. The situation can further deteriorate by the tendency of disadvantaged youth to respond to initial failure by withdrawing from the situation causing discomfort. So, we see high-school grads as, well, as drop-outs drifting into a no-work way of life.

One of the counseling skills needed to overcome this difficulty is the skill of making a proper referral to either a job or for supportive services or both.

In many cases the youth we serve look upon referrals as "passing the buck." It is likely that this has been an accurate appraisal of past referrals he has experienced. At some time the youth probably went to an agency which promised to do something for him. After a series of talks a fellow wrote something on a piece of paper and told him to report somewhere else. When he arrived, there was no one who seemed to know anything about who he was or why he had come. At this point, he gave up and returned home. This could have happened within the school system, the employment service, the health center, or the welfare center. Buck passing is an institutional disease that afflicts most agencies serving the poor. This does not mean, of course, that counselors should not refer. It means that, before referring, they will:

Prepare the student

Prepare the receiving agency

Be exacting in follow-up

Hold the receiving agency accountable for its performance

Encourage the trainee to return to discuss the results of the referral.

Preparing a youth for a referral should be as simple and unambiguous as possible. If a counselor has little idea of how the student perceives what he is doing, he hasn't done his job. Every opportunity to encourage him to say how he feels about the referral should be given.

Included in any preparation for referral is the expressed desire on the part of the counselor to learn what took place. Therefore the youth is given a time to return or to call as soon after the referral as possible. The receiving agency can be prepared by a brief letter, which can be hand-delivered by the youth or sent before his scheduled time.

Agencies must be held accountable for their treatment of youth referred. If an inquiry reveals that the promised service was not forthcoming, it is the counselor's responsibility to get redress for the youth. Since many agencies depend on referrals, a feedback of the incident in question, done professionally and unemotionally, will usually get results. The likelihood is that even if the agency in question is poorly run, your referrals from then on will get better service than others because the staff members were held professionally accountable for their performance. Finally, over a period of time, the feedback from the youth adds up to an accurate picture of the variety and availability of services in the community.

The failure of many well planned counseling programs occurs at the point of the delivery of services. Careful implementation from the design to its institutionalization is a difficult process. There is built-in distortion as the program moves through administrative and supervisory channels to the practitioner. For example: there is a program I believe exists at the centers I administer. However, it is likely a somewhat different one that each of the center heads knows exists in his center. The program the staff know exists is different than the one the center administrator believes is going on. Of course, the program the youths know exist is different from the one the staff believes exists. How does one go about reducing the distortion?

This is a function of leadership. The leader must establish the climate of trust and honesty so that effective communication between practitioner and supervisor can take place. When the supervisor can be perceived as a helping person by the staff, then each practitioner can feel sufficiently supported to test the outer limits of the program's potential.

An additional factor in successfully implementing programs for the disadvantaged is the selection of staff. The counseling staff, particularly, should have a generally optimistic view of life's possibilities, high energy, and be committed to serving them.

An issue confronting many schools serving a disadvantaged minority population is: can an all white staff develop an effective counseling program for non-white youths? While it is likely, for example, that a well trained, committed white counselor can successfully help most black youths, the lack of sensitivity implicit in having an all white staff would create considerable hostility which would be expressed towards the institution offering the program.

Some schools have begun to use paraprofessionals to compensate for the lack of available minority professional staff. Whether an all white professional staff and an all black paraprofessional staff would be acceptable to the black



community is questionable.

Possibly the use of the New Careers model with a career ladder with such categories as counselor aide, counselor associate, and assistance counselor, with appropriate formal and on-the-job training requirements, could be a solution to the enormous need for counselors from minority populations.

In a meeting which included articulate members of the black community the following statements made by them were likely reflective of the growing disenchantment with traditional school counseling:

Major institutions of higher education, and public schools, are excluding black people by their method of recruitment. Our major investment should be with the people of the community. Counselor-training programs should be taken into the local communities to train indigenous folk.

We should take a look at who is doing counselor-training. If we go to universities, are the professors really knowledgeable about problems of the disadvantaged?

More consistent recruitment of counselors needs to be done in local communities. There is a 'job-defensiveness' on the part of (professional) people in utilizing indigenous persons. We have to address ourselves to the kinds of staffing and training requirements for counselors.

Certain administrative problems arise when the counselor operates as agent, advocate, or ombudsman. Staff tensions are likely to develop in the act of delivering counseling services. Now they are handled by the principal, superintendent, or supervisor can determine the success of the counseling program.

An observation I would like to make is that programs benefit from staff tensions that are created out of role differentiation. Almost every program administrator is aware of some conflict between the counselor and the teaching staff. These tensions can be used to improve service to the youth.

There are no conflicts in labor-management relations when a sweetheart contract is being negotiated. Thus administrative need for staff peace and harmony are not necessary guarantees of a high level of service to the youth.

When the counselor can feed back to the staff the youth's perceptions of what is happening in the school and when he can feed back to the staff what is happening to the youth after placement, and when the counselor can confront the youth with the likely outcomes of his present behavior in training, we have a dynamic interaction that is not always smooth, not always pleasant, but the accountability of the system to provide the best preparation it can, and the accountability of the youth for his behavior within the system leads to the kinds of tensions that are growth-producing for all.

## **SUPPORTING SERVICES**

The variety of needs of disadvantaged youths which must be provided for necessitates an active interventionist strategy on the part of the counselor. In his attempt to provide support he will discover that he must become more and more knowledgeable about community resources, particularly those funded under "anti-poverty" legislation. The variety of supportive services can be seen from the following two paragraphs summarizing the counseling services provided under Experimental and Demonstration projects funded by the U.S. Department of Labor,

prepared by Professor Jesse Gordon of the University of Michigan.<sup>1</sup>

“Almost all the projects except those which very narrowly defined the limits of their counseling roles were interventionist in practice, if not in philosophy. That is, they directly assisted, supported, or stood for their clients in the clients’ dealings with their social and institutional environments. Project personnel argued for their clients in law courts, intervened with the police, with housing and welfare authorities, intervened in the clients’ families, negotiated with creditors, employers, and school officials—even with the draft boards.

“This dramatic shift toward interventionism probably reflects the feeling of counseling personnel in Experimental and Demonstration projects that the usual assumption that clients’ environment are basically manageable by the clients once they have resolved their inner conflicts or uncertainties is not valid for disadvantaged youth. Thus interventionism suggests a recognition that even in the best of mental health, disadvantaged youth alone and unsupported are not able to control the array of impersonal and hostile forces operating in their environments which interfere with decision-making.”

Among the supportive services that could be of effective help are:

1. Dental, medical care and eyeglasses
2. Welfare Agencies
3. Clothing (Radio Station WOR Christmas Fund)
4. Housing Information
5. Day care and/or baby-sitting facilities
6. Loan funds for work-related emergencies
7. Psychiatric services, including therapy and case work
8. Immigration Help
9. Transcript interpretation for foreign students
10. Citizenship information
11. Income tax filing and information
12. Child adoption procedure
13. Medicaid, Medicare and Aid to Dependent Children Information
14. Legal services
15. Transportation facilities

1. Jesse Gordon. **Testing, Counseling and Supportive Services for Disadvantaged Youth.** Experiences of MDTA Experimental and Demonstration Project for Disadvantaged Youth. OMPER 1968.

## THE COUNSELORS FEEDBACK

The work of the counselor sensitizes him to the need for program flexibility and innovation. His problem may be to discover ways to feedback this information to the administration. This may involve him in the newer concerns for school people—that of program development and job development.

This is an entrepreneurial function. It may be that youths would be better served if a portion of the counselor's time is spent in developing contacts among employers, community action workers, manpower specialists as well as his more traditional contacts, the college and technical school admissions offices.

He can document the need for short-term training programs for potential school leavers. He may also be required to help design such a program. His work with employers can be expanded from seeing them as resource people for his orientation program to resource people to help suggest minimum skills necessary to assure entry-level jobs for non-graduates.

The counselor's understanding of the need for a more relevant school experience, an outgrowth of his group counseling work, can lead him to suggest an integrated Math-English-Vocational Skills Program in a remedial setting.

In his attempt to provide supportive services he will discover that he must become more and more knowledgeable about community resources, particularly those funded under "anti-poverty" legislation. Finally, as he recognizes the need to offer continued service after graduation or school leaving, he will be involved in designing evening programs so that he can serve his students at least up to the age of 21.

I believe that much of the new input for in-school youth programs will come from MDT Projects as well as other projects such as my own, the Job Counseling Center, which developed during the experimental and demonstration period of the United States Department of Labor beginning around 1963. With increasing funding levels under the Voc-ed Act, those, including the counselor, attempting a more viable and more relevant innovative vocational educational experience will look to some of the successful practices of out-of-school youth programs.

There is the likelihood that vocational training will continue in a variety of settings, with possibly less reliance on vocational education in a traditional school setting. As Harold Reed of the USES states in the recent Vocational Guidance Quarterly (December 1968): "It has become clear that the range of student characteristics, the social and economic variations within the population, the great variety of educational and training needs of citizens and employers is of such magnitude that no one educational system can cope with the demand."

May I conclude with a quote from Professor Carroll Miller in his opening chapter, "Vocational Guidance in the Perspective of Cultural Change," contained in Borow's *Man in a World of Work*:

"Whatever the responsibilities which ultimately devolve upon vocational guidance, it seems clear that they will be too broad to be supported by the older and limited concept of matching youth and jobs. Bare-bones vocational guidance of the classical sort, its faith pinned on disseminating information, will prove inadequate in offering any real help to the culturally deprived and otherwise disadvantaged, to the out-of-school unemployed youth, to potential dropouts, and to delinquents from whatever background—for these do not come exclusively from the slums. Such tasks involve both the providing of new opportunities and assistance in reshaping a way of life."

**PERSPECTIVES ON THE WORKSHOP**

by

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Let me begin by saying that my review is much more a critical analysis than a conference summary. Thus, while I have not avoided evaluation, my essential purpose has been to examine selectively the issues which pervaded the conference, explicitly and implicitly; the main themes and ideas that emerged; and the significance of the workshop for future activities. I cannot adequately reflect the various constituencies represented here nor the detailed contributions, valuable as they are, of the work groups but I have tried to provide perspective where it is quite clear perspective is very much needed.

One perspective that I think may be helpful is to reflect on the issues that we have addressed but rather as issues which existed before we met and about which we had strong positions and that seriously affected the ways in which the papers and the content of the conference were considered. There are several such fundamental issues which provided the climate and context of our workshop and they may be posed rather simply. First, how much can be done within the present system of vocational education. As a matter of fact, the choice of keynote speakers explicitly recognized this as a fundamental issue inasmuch as one of our keynoters dealt with demonstration programs sponsored by a major foundation and the other reflected on the so-called special programs that are typically outside the vocational education system as we know it. It may further be noted that a number of our exemplary programs, a number of our cases and specific ideas and techniques were chosen largely from outside the mainstream of vocational education and it became apparent in our workgroups and in the major areas of criticism and concern that this fundamental question of whether or not it is possible to accomplish our goals **within** the vocational system as we know it, was pervasive.

A second basic issue, one which was reflected in the purposes of the workshop may again be stated very simply: namely, the importance of **how-to-do-it** techniques to carry out the mission of working with the disadvantaged. There were many participants here and many other professionals and laymen, in the system and outside the system, who feel strongly that we **do** know how to do it. That there is in fact a considerable body of experience and knowledge and know-how and that in fact many people have been trained and trained effectively in a variety of settings. We may have to reformulate the question. Thus, it may be said that the need expressed in the workshop purpose bypasses the fundamental truth that there is a vast body of expertise which does exist despite the attacks that have been leveled at it and that our major concern should not be whether we are able to deliver simply because we do not have the knowhow. Thus, a number of people at the workshop saw the issue, without quite saying so, as one where the nation and this workshop **really** mean it and whether we are ready to back it up with funds, power and attitudes, as more fundamental than distilling the essence of exemplary practices.

To formulate it another way it's been traditionally described by some sociologists, some philosophers of science even, as being the issue of technology vs. ideology. Now this country is supreme in technology, that is the technique of **doing** things and doing them well. It's rather the beliefs, the willingness to utilize knowledge and sometimes to convert it into technology that is the basic problem formulated by Robert Lynd some thirty years ago, "Knowledge for What?" Because even if we came up with all the techniques and the knowhow would we then use them? It is the **reluctance** to implement rather than the knowledge that is lacking and so this problem of technology and ideology has been a persistent one and I think that implicit in many of the criticisms has been the notion that finding "how to do it" is a "cop-out."

Another issue which ran more deeply possibly because it is so obvious, was the fact that as soon as you get into the area of work you have the most natural, the more pressing way to involve the community. That is—there can't be a better vehicle, there can't be a more natural basic way in which a community gets involved because this is the life of

the community. However, to begin to think about the community really being involved in this area is like "thinking about the unthinkable" (to adopt a term from the nuclear gamesmen) and everybody draws a deep breath before they come to a conference and exhales very deeply when they leave. In between they allow themselves the luxury of thinking about these things; slowly and surely, however, it's penetrating into the system.

The corollary of this problem of the community being involved in the area of work which is so natural and normal and basic to our lives is the issue of the experts vs. the people, and again and again not only was it an issue underlying the conference but it permeated the discussions—the problem of the professionals, the establishment, those who know, those who have the background, those that have the credentials vs. the question of how much of a reservoir of talent and ability and knowledge there is which has not been tapped. This is an issue which has been primarily addressed by assertion of dogma rather than by facts. But again it's thinking about the unthinkable. To think for example that we can now have people as teachers with a very uneven background which would never have been accepted as a basis for "professional performance" means that not only do some of us get involved in protecting and defending our professions and our various establishments but I do think that implicit in this is something else. The problem of the experts vs. the people isn't always one of people hiding behind the credentials barrier. I think there is a genuine concern that by dropping too many credentials in the long run you hurt a lot of people and I think that unless we can face this issue squarely—that there is talent and ability to be used but if it turns out that we use it on faith only we may harm the very constituency involved. The defenders are frequently defenders purely of the faith and not of facts but the problem of the Experts vs. the People is one which I consider to be in the long run one of the few ways in which we can really harness some understandings about "how to do it." This is where we really have to learn how to do it.

The last issue I saw—I must remind you that I saw all these as underlying the specific announced content of the workshop—this is the whole issue of what prior decisions need to be made, what relocations of power have to be made before programs can be mounted and I guess this was the urgent sense of what many participants brought with them. For example, if again and again the limitations of training programs are those that come from unions or from state bureaus or from employers or from other powerful or irrational or racist constituencies or structures then indeed we have to really address ourselves to the question of what prior considerations should be given, otherwise we get trapped again and again in having the know-how, the tools, the equipment, the machinery, even the staff but then we hit the basic barrier. Now this issue is not as simple as it seems at first hand because it isn't always a matter purely of power. For example, in the case of the employers who are the single force in our country likely to have economic, political and other concentrations of power, it is a fact that employers keeping certain people out of apprenticeships, out of desirable jobs have established barriers which do not merely reinforce the existing system, they are self-defeating. There are studies that show that employers themselves violate their own credential barriers because they themselves aren't always aware of the fact that what they set up as a diploma or a certificate or a degree is something which in fact is not operable.

The work of Ivor Berg and Marcia Freedman has shown how employers may literally lose good people through irrational use of the credential barrier. I need hardly remind you of Bob Schrank's illuminating statement, (in which he turns the tables on the psychologists of "lower-class" motivation) that employers in their desire for instant gratification or instant profits sometimes cannot defer and delay the gratifications that come from long-term developing of good people from a variety of backgrounds. We may interpret this as a two way losing situation—all parties lose out.

Now then as to the themes, the ideas, the content of the conference: I've selected four or five themes which it seems to me were recurrent. Thus, despite the stated agenda and the mission of the conference, person after person said at one time or another that they were looking for something new. That is—a constant theme was to look for innovations, for new ideas. "I came here looking for new ideas but haven't come across a new idea," people said again and again. Now if we relate this theme, this question, this search to the issue I formulated, I think that you will see that this could well be a chimera, that people are pursuing something that isn't easily to be found, there just aren't that many new ideas! This is one of the most illusory aspects of many conferences. Thus when we fund "exemplary programs" and "stimulate innovations" we are frequently hoaxing ourselves and our constituents to think that we're going to come up with "new things." The real question it seems to me is: whether or not many of the fine visual aids, many of the interesting curriculum materials, many of the ideas about teacher-training are not things that exist already in the reservoirs of rural and urban and black and white, big city and small city, and need to be utilized—they're there. The pursuit of innovation then is at the same time frequently both futile and unnecessary.

On this matter of innovation it is a fact that in terms of what eventually came out—there are many people who came here with specific ideas and suggestions and materials. There sometimes are bits and pieces that are innovative if you haven't known them before but are not innovative in the sense that they haven't existed before.

Let me take a second theme in terms of content of the actual conference: this was racism—racism, power, lack of power. That is, no matter how you looked at programs, funding, staffing, other things, a recurrent and continuing theme was the one of racism. Now one can easily turn to the Kerner Report and say "It's established—why discuss it?" We know that there was the Kerner Report and there was **One Year Later** and now it's two weeks later after the **One Year Later** and I think we can say that by and large the question of racism, the meaning of racism and how it manifests itself is something which may be best dealt with frontally, in specific terms, in program terms. Thus, the question of what kinds of occupations are being trained for may seem like a problem of implicit racism but actually this is an explicitly racist problem. The fact is that in our nation's history we have had a clear stratification not in terms of level only but in **types** of occupations. And we know and we can't avoid the fact (although "the dialogue" doesn't deal with it adequately) that as soon as you talk about certain occupations you must write in a subscript: "this is an occupation which has been traditionally black or servile and we must deal with it." It's not enough to say that there are opportunities in the labor market. What came through again and again is that the objective opportunities in the labor market cannot overcome the fact that there has been a history which is attached to these objective opportunities in the labor market. Furthermore, the possibility of new promotive techniques to disguise racism is what is so suspect as compared to old blatancies. It seems to me that this particular theme recurred, expressed or unexpressed, whether it was in sessions on community participation or curriculum, this came through to me. After all, this conference is about occupational development of the **disadvantaged**.

Now, I must say that in terms of the content of the conference a major area was what I can only call rhetoric. Now you know it's par for the course. Paper after paper, speaker after speaker, indulge in ritualism, the ritual of making sure that they are not considered racist, that they are for the disadvantaged and I must tell you that if I were to do a formal content analysis of how many pages dealt with this it would be a major part of the content of the workshop. Now it does seem to me that the time has come when we go into workshops to develop programs that we don't need 15-page preambles for 2-page presentations.

I have not had the time or the perspective for digesting adequately the outcome of all the workshops as well as all the paper sessions—I leave this to the more thoughtful, more thorough synthesis which will be prepared as a



workshop summary. However, I do have some thoughts about the concrete outcomes of the workshop which may be helpful in appraising our efforts. First is the emergence from all the philosophizing, ritual and otherwise, a perspective on the place of vocational education in American life which is the most unabashedly, unapologetic, assertive conviction that it should be central rather than peripheral.

Thus, in the tension between those concerned with large-scale frameworks and those who are focused on program components, the possibility of a system of vocational education, to use Marvin Feldman's phrase, began to take shape. I consider this a concrete outcome because of the drastic implications it may have. Thus, in one work group, the serious suggestion was made that all the funds being devoted to secondary general education be put into vocational education and make "general education" subordinate to the occupational objectives. One adjunct to the new concept of an educational system. This hyperbolic and extreme way of putting it begins to offer us a way of conceptualizing what is a separate appendage which gets assistant superintendencies or special offices or special budget for special needs, instead of being crucial and central and at the core of the enterprise.

Thus, vocational education really has to be in the only sense of the term the basic education of America and the contrast between basic and comprehensive and vocational-technical gets us into the kind of distortions which make it impossible to develop a system or a framework. I'm not suggesting that there could have been a better format for workshops, I can't come up with a recommendation on how to do it but it seems to me that the vocabulary, the kind of thinking, the levels of abstraction, the ways of formulating, meant that again and again the proceedings of the workshops reflected inability to work through problems. People moved back and forth from system to component unsystematically. It seems to me that if we are going to develop an effective set of programs in this area we ought to set as a challenge for ourselves a more effective way to get systems people to work with program people without necessarily thinking that one is going to be that petty or the other that esoteric.

On this matter, I think it is important that I then come back to the issue I stated earlier, The Experts vs. The People. I've seen this in many vocational as well as the education conferences in which the fact that you do have people dealing at one level of abstraction and other people dealing with concrete suggestions and ideas becomes a barrier. It was a barrier in many of the workshops. There were barriers of ideology, beliefs, problems of power, of community involvement but there was a barrier of different levels of expertise not always being harmonized and in fact being the source of what I can only call dissonance. If not dissonance, limited communication. If not limited communication, disregard. Now the question is—Is everything in this field so difficult or complex that the masses cannot understand? Thus, the jargon of input, and output, of spin off, may be necessary but I'm concerned when some of the jargon accepted in one particular constituency becomes a barrier to dealing with content and substance and ideas. It could happen, we know it can happen. Now there are all kinds of jargon. I mention these because I'm concerned that at a time in which there are new groups moving into vocational education—people who have come in from guidance and counseling, and psychology, economics, sociology, from social work, from community action and so on—all involved in the problems of work and vocational development, it is bad enough when we have the various jargons interfering, but even worse when all the professionals themselves do not communicate with the people of the community. We've really got to find ways in which all of us do not take our private systems and our vocabularies and impose them on each other.

As I close I must react to the feelings, the climate and the activities that seemed to me to increase to a crescendo as the workshop moved toward its close. There need to be ways of mobilizing the people in the community and the people in education, so that with relatively few innovations but rather with commitment, will, purpose and a desire



to actually do the job of getting the poor and the disadvantaged into the mainstream is possible. The divergencies of opinion as to whether this is going to be accomplished by political action, by community involvement, by a variety of pressures or technical planning are notable points of dissension. In an area as crucial as work and vocational education it seems to me that the process that took place in this conference may presage new approaches to dealing with matters which have too long been left in the hands of what some call experts and others call the establishment.

CURRICULUM IMPLICATIONS FOR AN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM  
THAT MEETS THE NEEDS OF DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS

by

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Presented at the

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## IDENTIFYING THE DISADVANTAGED

Education stands on the threshold of making vast curriculum, methodological and attitudinal changes which will allow for individual differences and which can annihilate the infliction and the shame of the schools—"the dumb child." The circumstances surrounding and causing the label to be placed on an individual are often identified with poverty and despair. The changes involve implementing flexible programs that provide instructional alternatives and a wide range of opportunities that meet the needs of the average, the swift and the slow. The differences in the abilities between most students are fairly small and are less innate than socially conditioned. Relevant educational programs must be individualized and provide meaning for those students who have been dulled by social deprivation or where the motivations and incentives for learning have not been built into prior learning experiences. As well, there must be a relationship between the learning experience and the rhythm, attention span, and learning pace for each individual.

Change must be forthcoming because the curriculum, teaching methods, and materials used to educate the typical middle class are grossly irrelevant for meeting the requirements of disadvantaged students. Programs that enable the individual to utilize his own personal style and to integrate his personality into a group must be planned and developed; they will not just happen. Instruction which meets the needs of a large group of the student population, with characteristics itemized below, places new priorities on vocational education:

1. Slow learning students who are performing below ability.
2. Slow average students who are "just getting by" in the regular classroom.
3. Students who presently do not qualify and would probably not be successful under traditional vocational school standards.
4. Students who do not meet the rigid entrance requirements for area vocational-technical schools.
5. Students who want or need to develop saleable skills but are offered only general experiences in comprehensive school settings.

Every community, city or rural area having a normal cross-section of American youth will find such students typified by one or more of the following characteristics:

1. They have no satisfactory avenue, opportunity or channel of growth toward industrial competence.
2. They are unsuccessful in a conventional school setting and need an alternative path for a time to develop security, self-satisfaction and peace with themselves.
3. They are characterized as misfits in schools and are notorious for their hostility and unruliness or their passivity and apathy.

4. They have psychologically dropped out of school two or three years before they can physically drop out at age 16.

The educational system presented graphically on the following pages describes the development and implementation of programs which serve all students. The implementation of this pattern will allow large numbers of students, including the disadvantaged, to be assimilated into a mainstream instructional program. The presentation which follows highlights some important components of the system.

## FUNCTIONAL JOB ANALYSIS

Analysis by job function provides a rationale for clustering related bodies of knowledge and identifying education experiences that develop competencies needed for entry-level employment. The analyses completed to date show that a wide range of competencies are needed to fill entry-level opportunities when job function and skills are clustered by major economic groupings. If vocational education is to prepare a significantly large number of students for immediate entry into the world of work and provide others with experiences for continuing their education, curricula based on functional job analyses are imperative. The technique of clustering jobs that require a range of competencies, by design, establishes a continuum, both horizontally and vertically, of "student spin-off points." When the competencies of an individual match the entry-level job performance requirements for a job, a student may leave the formal education setting on a part-time basis to perform in a real work-experience commensurate with his needs and abilities at that given time. The other alternative being that he remain in school and continue to expand his knowledge and develop competencies of a higher order. In this way quality education is no longer measured by the number of students prevented from dropping out of school, but measurement is based on the educational opportunities provided for individual needs at any given time.

Preparation of job analysis functions is extremely important for developing the curriculum to prepare a range of students with a series of competencies that are saleable to the business-industrial community. Such an analysis is also useful in identifying the range and type of exploratory experiences students should receive before preparing themselves with specific saleable competencies. The functional job analyses prepared on a national basis at the first order of specificity should be examined at the second order for relevancy to the students comprising a given school in a given community. Such a second order development will aid vocational educators to determine the exploratory functions for each grade level. This type of "re-analysis" is needed by planners at the local level to prepare curriculum guides for use by teachers and teams of teachers. Guides, prepared on the basis of second level functional analyses, are designed in behavioral terms, with objectives stated in terms of experiences rather than in terms of instructional content or subject matter. These objectives should therefore be relevant in order to become personal goals of the student.

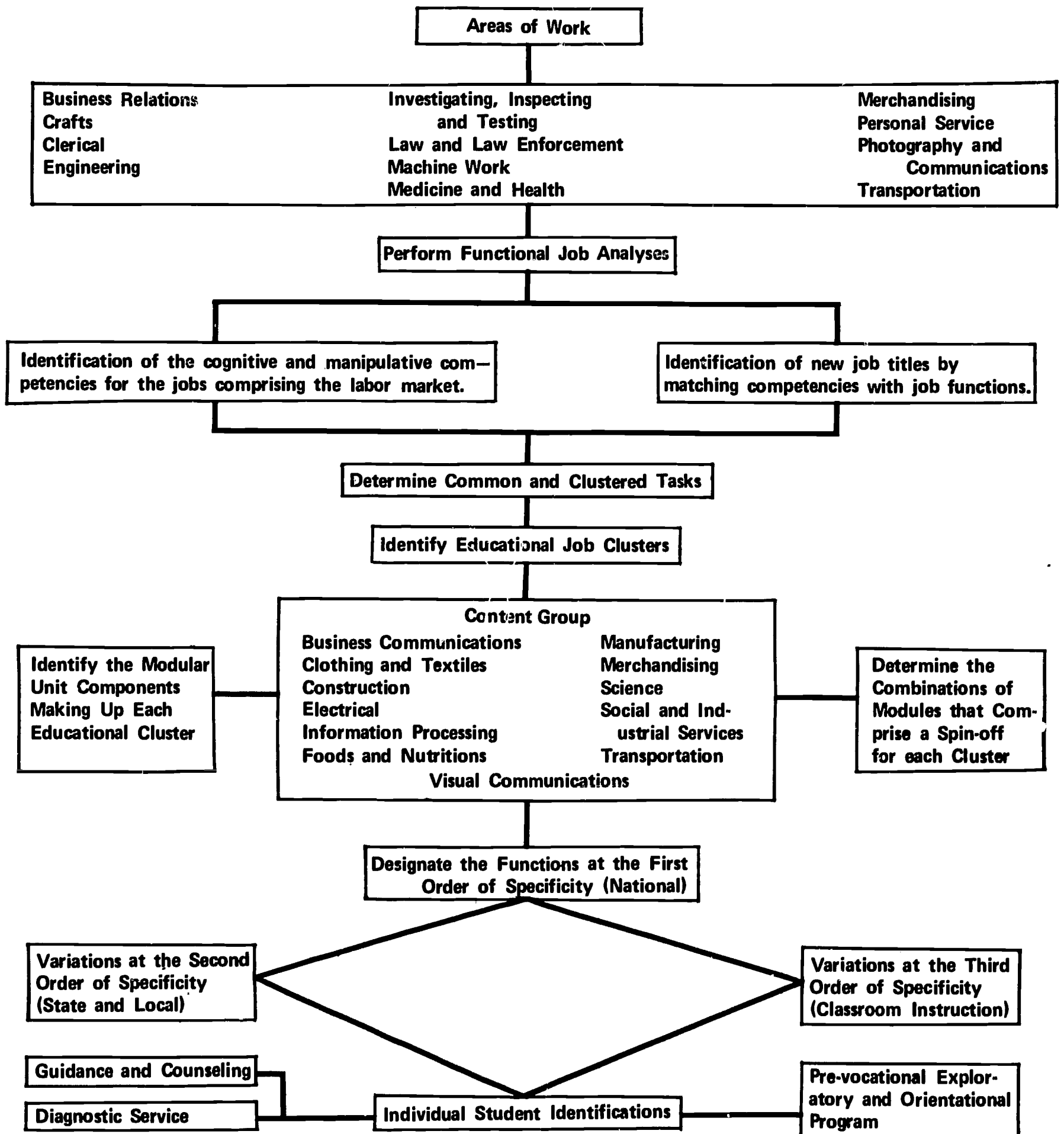
Many students may be assimilated into mainstream vocational instructional programs; others may need specialized instructional programs; and still others may be referred to "outside" agencies for specialized program help. Programs must be designed to perform two functions: (1) First and foremost they must serve as educational entry programs where interests can be advanced, motivation instilled, confidence gained, and aspiration levels raised both vocationally and academically and (2) at the same time, they serve as skill development programs in semi-skilled and service areas as well as in the most sophisticated job clustered areas encompassed in traditional vocational education areas.

Detailed sequential procedures for operational "tool up" of the programs at the state or local level are:

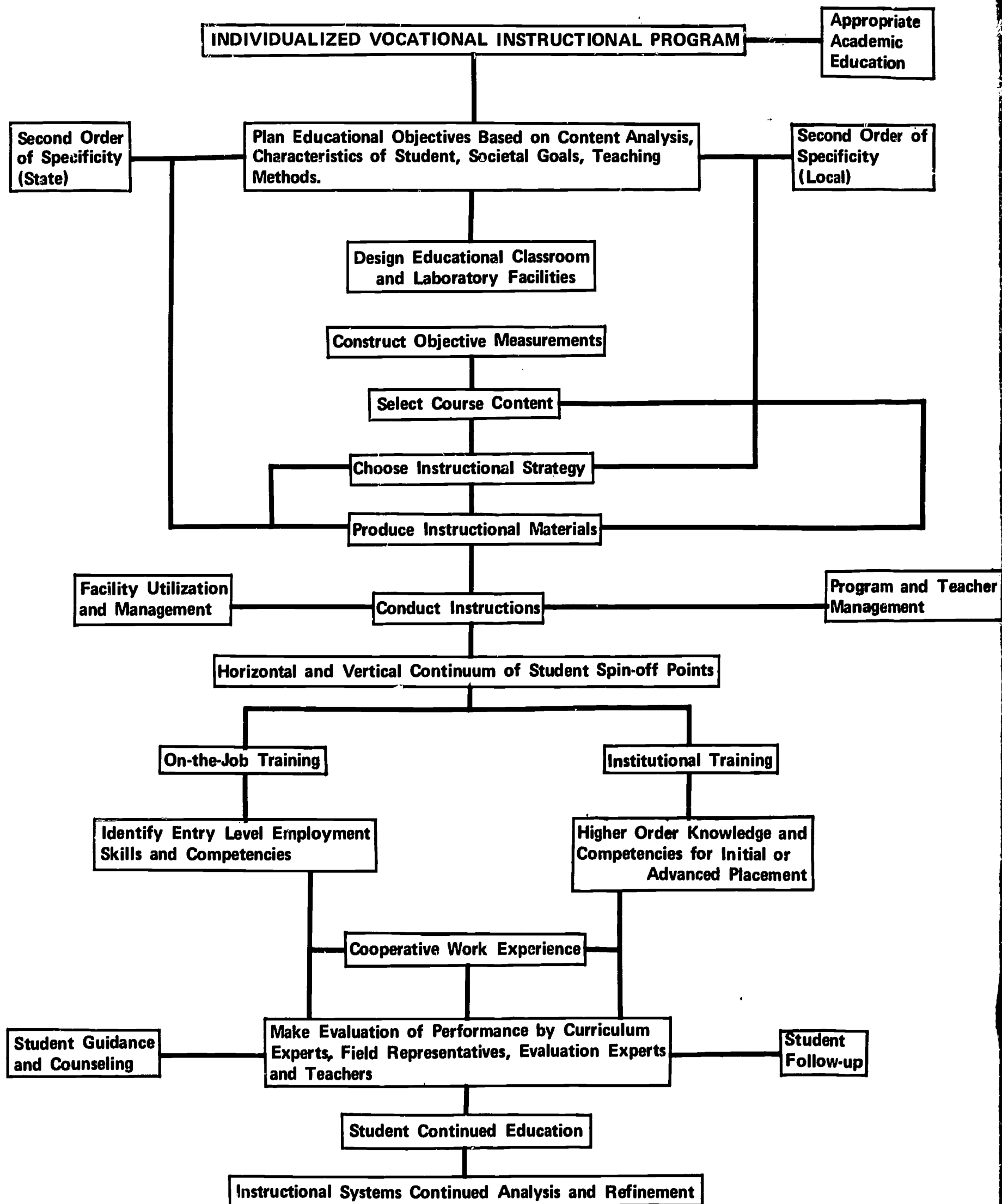


# THE DESIGN OF AN INSTRUCTIONAL SYSTEM TO SERVE ALL STUDENTS

## PROGRAM AND STUDENT SELECTION



## PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION



1. Identify those students who are disadvantaged in one of more ways who are not being served, but could profit from vocational experiences.
2. Survey local industry and obtain the employment outlook from local, state, and national employment personnel in broad based industrial classifications.
3. Determine the occupational classifications which can be implemented and which have employment possibilities at the occupational, vocational and technical level.
4. Establish a general advisory committee to function at all educational levels for each industrial classification to establish objectives and potentials.
5. Use craft advisory committees to determine needed physical facilities (specifically designed lab, use of several labs, lab conversion), equipment and course outlines.
6. Inform counselors, students and parents of the objectives and potentials of the program.
7. Select a teacher from existing staff who could be upgraded through in-service education or employ a teacher with industrial experience.
8. Select academic teachers who are motivated to meet the unique problems of alienated students and undertake steps to coordinate their efforts with those of laboratory teachers.
9. Inform industry and potential employers about attainment and competence for each level of preparation in an industrial classification.
10. Establish a functional cooperative work experience relationship with industry.
11. Begin the program and work with advisory committees to evaluate and determine:
  - a. Time devoted to each unit of instruction
  - b. Logic and continuity in the order of presentations
  - c. Effectiveness of the laboratory-academic team effort to advance potentials.
  - d. Adequateness of the program to prepare for employment
  - e. Appropriateness of equipment, supplies and materials used in the preparation
  - f. Skills and understandings desired before cooperative work experience.
  - g. The effectiveness of cooperative work experiences to develop potential
12. Continued research concerning the function of occupational programs to fulfill long-range potential by meeting short-range needs.

It is important that students be identified with a broad based industrial classification. Each student will seek or be assigned an appropriate starting level under a classification and steps will be taken to aid the student in seeking his "own" level as he progresses in the program. Vertical scheduling enables students to move toward more advanced or different experiences when they are ready. In a large high school where numbers are available to provide programs at various levels, students can readily see and witness the "stair step" approach. In smaller high schools, students will be assigned to a job-centered lab, designed to perform a function that meets students' needs based on interest and past performance. These must be established after a realistic survey of the area labor market and be flexible enough to change to fit employment needs.

## **PITTSBURGH'S PROGRAM**

In an attempt to move toward the model programs based on job analysis procedures, programs have been developed in Pittsburgh in a number of areas which are warranted by the employment market. They are: Laundry-Pressing-Dry Cleaning, Maintenance Repair, Duplication Specialist, Ornamental Metal Fabrication, Shoe Repair, Biological Science Helper, Auto Body Repair, Small Gas Engine Repair, Service Station Management and Upholstery Repair. Such programs are taught on a three-period per day basis and are designed as two-year programs including a cooperative work experience. The program is designed to be two years in length to provide continuity for the student as he endeavors to find his niche and develop personal competencies which he can sell or which will make him promotable into an advanced vocational-technical program.

Research and experience have indicated that changes must be made in the content and instructional methods used in programs. For example, only about 40 per cent of the students taking Shorthand I continued into Shorthand II when using a traditional symbolic system of instruction. The introduction of alphabetic systems (Stenoscript), which allow the student to develop skills of up to 100 words a minute, and the advent of stenotype, stenograph and touch shorthand is increasing this percentage dramatically. Competence and saleable skills in any of the systems indicated above are becoming increasingly more widely accepted by business, government and industry.

During the job preparatory years, it is estimated that one half of a student's time will be spent in the library, job performance laboratories, or in other work areas where he can search for answers, analyze data, and develop his conclusions in writing. To accommodate the wide range of abilities and the significantly large numbers of students for which such a design is intended, it is desirable to separate the cognitive and psycho-motor competencies and tasks for each cluster group. Classrooms are essential to teach the cognitive information within a cluster to homogeneous groups of students, learning carrels are necessary for individualized programmed instruction, and massive flexible and open space laboratories are necessary to teach manipulative skills to very heterogeneous student bodies.

## **LABORATORIES**

All students who are developing either short or long range saleable skills, whether at the beginning or advanced stages of their development, may be educated within the same laboratory. Initially designed space should be flexible enough for educational planners to respond to future changes with a minimum of inconvenience and expense. Fixed installations should be located in the laboratory's center, and perimeter areas should be free and unassigned in order to permit changes and expansion. With the aid of folding walls and partitions, instructional space should be designed to shift accommodations for small or large groups, and for different types of activities and equipment.

The model lab should utilize "open space" and house general job clusters. Facilities for general job clusters may be blended to better utilize space, equipment, and innovative teaching techniques. The proposed model ultimately results in reduced capital outlay and operational costs, as well as offering an increased range of educational experiences for each student.

Laboratories may be equipped and used to meet needs in a given area in three distinct ways:



### **1. SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED LAB**

Laboratories designed to perform a specific function are appropriate when (1) adequate space is available to house a separate lab, (2) employment needs warrant increased student enrollment to justify the lab, (3) competencies needed by students before a cooperative work experience warrant the lab, and (4) facilities do not lend themselves to any other creative activity.

### **2. USE OF SEVERAL LABS**

The use of several laboratories as facilities may be beneficial when they can be adequately equipped and coordinated to provide beneficial experiences. In such a situation the student is provided closely related experiences as he rotates through a sequence of different laboratory activities. This approach to facility utilization in vocational education is most appropriate when several unit laboratories exist within a given school framework.

### **3. LAB CONVERSION TO PERFORM A SPECIFIC FUNCTION**

In many instances, a laboratory can be converted to house new equipment to perform the specific function needed in the given program. The lab does not necessarily have to be devoted during the entire day to this particular area; and in most cases, it will not, because the lab must serve one, two or possibly three different needs and functions. It means, in some cases, that specialized job equipment and roll-in types of facilities will be used. Adequate storage space is necessary to enable much of this material to be put away at the end of the class, or at least rolled out of the laboratory working area. Adequate facilities are needed for both the development and storage of visual aids in all three types of laboratory utilization.

Programs are set up on a two-year basis, but when students do not desire to advance to another level in the program, or cannot benefit from instruction at a high level, they are provided a work-study cooperative experience in business and industry. It is felt this student will benefit from a cooperative work experience because he understands both manipulative and cognitive work at a given level. The aim of the cooperative work experience is to advance the student's total education, and to have him perform well on the job. Industrial representatives are informed of the competencies and level of attainment of occupational students before placement. After this experience the student may desire to continue to the next advanced level within this classification and he should be permitted to do so. Education need not end at 17 or the completion of 12 years of school!

## **COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH**

Disadvantaged students beginning their work in an industrial classification are usually 16 years of age and their achievement level in academic areas is usually two or more years behind the national average. Paralleling their laboratory program must be an appropriate academic education which meets the needs of these students. Thus, each program has two prongs with both laboratories and general education segments. Much of the general education is provided to stimulate cognitive thinking and understandings, but personal and human relation qualities must also be emphasized. Many students could eventually find employment in service occupations where such qualities are paramount.

The student's removal from advanced endeavors to develop dormant academic skills and to motivate him vocationally will, hopefully, only be temporary. With special assistance provided in the initial vocational programs, the student will move back into the progressing mainstream of the educational cycle. If this re-entry cannot be achieved for any reason the student will have a saleable skill in a vocational field and enough general education skill to be literate and able to communicate effectively.

## READING

During the general education phase of the vocational program, reading classes using non-conventional materials can be used to capture the student's attention. They may read whatever they are interested in, whether it be in their vocational area or areas of interest which for many teenagers may be clothing styles, hot rods, sport cars or outer space. Once this is done, students are much more receptive to individual reading instruction. The major objective is to get students to read. Establishment and improvement in reading skills are particularly important because the total development of long-range potentials are closely related to reading achievement. This class and the remainder of the school day after the three-period laboratory experience is devoted to improving dormant academic abilities. This phase of the program will continue on a half-day basis when a cooperative work experience is begun.

The vocational education curriculum must utilize the results of the entry-level performance job analysis and provide modular experiences which reflect the cognitive and psycho-motor competencies necessary for employment in any selected job within an occupational cluster. It must be possible for a student to determine the extent and degree of his involvement in any knowledge-skill cluster. Truly individualized program planning builds on such a viewpoint and permits a student to grasp the subject matter at his own pace. Modular experiences in vocational education, coupled with short length scheduling sequences (modular scheduling), provide a system for flexible student scheduling.

The school can "reach" the pupil and aid in discovery of specific abilities needed for individual success by: (1) the combined efforts of vocational experiences in the laboratory and on the job; (2) general courses to extend and improve their educational background; and (3) related courses which stress social and adjustment competencies and attitudes. The scope of each program is intended to be as broad as the range of industrial materials, as deep and varied as the thought process, and as personal as are individual differences among the students.

## CONCLUSION

Critics of vocational education blame education for becoming "job-oriented" and training for jobs that will soon disappear. Even though automation and cybernetics are transforming our working society, many students need short-range goals which may be realized in the form of what may be considered rather narrow specialties. It is the objective of all vocational education that through this media a student's interest may be advanced, motivation instilled, confidence gained, and aspirative levels raised both vocationally and academically. In this way, education can truly help students develop their broad powers and long-range potentials.

Learners destined to face the working world must be flexible and have the ability to adapt what they have learned. Therefore, the concern of vocational educators should be directed toward preparing the learner for the immediate step from the classroom into a job or advanced education. Each learner must be advised and be receptive to the idea of the infiniteness of learning, the ability to make decisions, and the aspiration to contribute to society. The times demand that vocational educators be responsible to innovative ideas, reform and experimentation to better serve a significantly larger number of learners. Program emphasis must be placed on the learner and his individual performance expectations rather than on instructional content, subject matter or categories of vocations.

TURNING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION TO THE DISADVANTAGED:

WORKING WITH THE EMPLOYERS AND UNIONS

by

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FORD FOUNDATION, NEW YORK

Presented at the

NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FOR THE DISADVANTAGED

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Until very recently, the vocational education system has served mainly students from low and middle income families, who, for a variety of reasons, chose not to pursue academic higher education. The school records show that the system did well with the students who graduated—82.9 per cent being placed in the fields for which they were trained.<sup>1</sup> Employers, on the other hand, charge that vocational education is not equipping the student with essential skills. They claim that a far lower percentage (approx. 40 per cent) are really job ready at graduation. Most likely, the level of placement success is somewhere in between.

It has recently become clear that vocational education will have to serve a wider group—particularly the minorities, the migrants and the poor who are still outside the labor market. It will also have to increase its effectiveness in job preparation and placement. This realization is in part a result of the communications explosion, increasing demands of a tight labor market for trained manpower, and the many anti-poverty programs that began to organize the poor.

In order to fulfill their responsibilities to both the untrained, unemployed, and to the nation's industry, vocational educators are faced with a compelling challenge—to do as well in training the disadvantaged as they claim they have done with their graduate students. As stated in *The Manpower Report of the President, 1968*; "the essential task . . . is how to create a bridge that would bring youth into jobs more directly . . . But the problems also involve getting them into jobs that are not below their potential, that are not routine jobs into which they are forced for lack of any alternative."<sup>2</sup> Congress has made special provision for the vocational schools in this effort. Fifteen per cent of each state's vocational education funds must be spent on training persons with academic, socioeconomic, and other handicaps.

Clearly, there are many sources of information on training the disadvantaged: first, the many government anti-poverty programs; second the large number of industries involved in training and upgrading, and third the vocational schools, a few of which have been involved with the disadvantaged in past years.

One approach, and the one which will be taken in this paper, is to look at this past experience from two points of view. First, what does it tell us about the disadvantaged and second, what have we learned about the employers and unions. These insights should lead us to an understanding of how the schools and employers can best work together.

## II. WHAT CHARACTERIZES THE DISADVANTAGED?

Most of the population referred to today as disadvantaged are the minority groups—Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Mexican-Americans, American Indians, Cubans, and the nation's other poor migrant laborers. While it is dangerous to make generalizations about any such diverse groups, it is possible to consider what may be the implications of their common experience and background.

First, the work history of these people and their families has often conditioned them to respond negatively to



work and training. A large proportion have been offered only tedious and demeaning jobs so that they have come to feel that work holds no value in itself. In order to overcome this negative view, schools must provide training with skill content and a clear upgrading ingredient. The job at the end cannot be just another entry level dead-end.

The validity of this, particularly for disadvantaged youth, was underscored by a survey of several hundred Neighborhood Youth Corps applicants in New York City. "The Negro job applicant from the ghetto is much less committed to work as a source of intrinsic satisfaction, sees work much less as possessing or serving as a source of dignity, than does the middle class high school or college student. He is more likely to see work as a minimal means of surviving than as something of intrinsic interest or value."<sup>3</sup> The study went on to say that what motivated the applicants to come to the Youth Corps was a belief that they would get skill training with a reasonably well paying job at the end. While these findings only were from surveys of youth, they undoubtedly relate to disadvantaged adults as well.

Another large group of the disadvantaged, the agricultural workers, have worked often out-of-doors, without the noise and commotion of heavy machinery. They worked in fairly temperate climates. They have usually been able to see a direct relation between the task they do and the final product. Employers should realize that this is quite different from the often confusing and noisy settings of industrial plants. Trainees coming from the South may be bothered by the harsh weather of the North. In addition, the technical nature of many plants in which the product is only the result of many intricate and separate processes, may be disturbing.

Second, individuals in both groups may lack a vocational goal. Since they have had only limited opportunities to experiment with different occupations, many may not be ready to make a final job commitment. It is important for company staff and leadership to remember that these people are not being irresponsible and ungrateful. They are just exercising the right we tolerate and encourage in middle class persons—the right to make an intelligent vocational choice.

Third, many lack the skills required by industry. What education they received was often irrelevant to their experience and interests and, therefore, of little use in reaching their job objectives. They now need transferable skill training which will open up a range of opportunity.

Finally, certain of the disadvantaged may be unfamiliar with customs that others take for granted, such as manners of dress, behavior in certain situations, and punctuality. They may not be used to telephoning in when they are sick since no one really depended on them before. A few trainees at one Detroit Auto manufacturing plant could not tell the plant security guard from the policeman on the corner. So they thought the plant manager has asked for police protection from the dangerous new employees. Co-workers should be made aware that these factors tend to make trainees uneasy in a new job situation.

In the early Sixties, programs concentrated on pre-employment counseling to overcome these behavioral problems and to encourage good work habits. Within three years, however, it was widely agreed that work habits could not easily be taught in isolation. Only when there was good skill training and a job available, did work habits make sense. When these ingredients were present, it was found that disadvantaged trainees altered their behavior fairly quickly and without much assistance from program staff. Thus, it became clear that the difficult task was in imparting saleable skills.

Some programs have had success in skill training. The ingredients of these programs vary. In terms of the disadvantaged trainee, several things seem to be important. Employers have provided training and education leading to skilled jobs with advancement potential. The work was dignified and filled a community need. Such as the case in the Public Service Careers Program in New York City, to cite one example. This program, a half-work, half-study

project for employment in the human services, offered specific job experience, related education, and a guaranteed civil service career ladder job. It was found that the graduates were excellent workers with a turnover rate of 15 per cent, where 25 per cent was normal for traditional staff. Job supervisors often remarked how motivated and hardworking these new employees were.<sup>4</sup> Some in-plant programs achieved significant gains with programmed learning materials. Often, the step learning, with immediate reinforcement and correction seemed particularly well suited for the disadvantaged.

Keeping this picture of the student in mind, let us now look at the employers and see what their interest and experience has been.

### III. WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE EMPLOYERS?

Since the ultimate goal of vocational education is job placement, we should look at the factors that influence job availability—principally, the employers and the unions. We should try to understand why they are becoming interested in the disadvantaged and what this means for vocational educators.<sup>5</sup>

The reasons cited most often by employers is a specific manpower need. It appears that private industry's demand for skilled manpower increases annually and can no longer be met by the traditional labor force. Public service and government is another source of this expanding demand—in the health services alone, by 1967 employment had risen to over 60 per cent of the 1960 level.<sup>6</sup> During 1967, employment in the service producing industries rose by 5.1 per cent—thus, continuing a sharp increase in the employment need. The combination of these needs places great strains on the labor supply and makes clear that it is no longer tolerable to have a large segment of the population outside the labor market.

Employers are beginning to see that by 1975, 40 per cent of the increase in the work force will be minority workers.<sup>7</sup> They realize that many of their future employees are now among the disadvantaged and they hope to have someone else, in this case the vocational education schools, assume the cost and part of the responsibility for entry training.

Other employers get involved because they see their future success threatened by social unrest—particularly those in and around the central city ghetto. Realizing that unemployment is a major cause of racial hostility, they promote better training and jobs for the poor.

Still another group is anxious to improve customer relations or to fulfill what they consider to be their civic responsibility. A few more are pressured by contracts.

Many of these employers claim to have had discouraging experiences with graduates from vocational schools. A principal complaint is that students have been given outmoded skill training on dated equipment. Others charge that there are tremendous deficiencies in communications skills training. Unfortunately, these experiences tend to prejudice employers unfairly against the total vocational educational system.

In a study of employers and vocational education soon to be published in *American Education*, Robert Craig summed up the employers' experience in this way:

“Not only did we find these employers ‘socially conscious’ about broad problems such as minority

group training and impact of technology on careers, but we also found great concern for the specific problems of fitting obsolete or inadequate knowledge and skills of vocational education graduates into the work force. No employer expects that vocational educational graduates will bring a full set of skills to any particular job, but universal skills, such as communication, are often woefully lacking, and all too often, specific job skills taught in vocational education are virtually useless."<sup>8</sup>

### **What Does this Mean for Vocational Educators?**

First, it is evident that, for the most part, the employer's interest is real and often strengthened by a profit incentive. The task for vocational educators is to present their programs to employers in such a way that they appeal to these interests. This means convincing the employers that formation of cooperative arrangements with the vocational educational schools are a logical and profitable solution to their problems. In addition, it means outlining the range of up-to-date training that can be done and how it can be somewhat tailored to the needs of a group of employers. Presentation of some studies of successful vocational education programs might be helpful in convincing employers of the potentials of industry-education cooperation. Another approach would be to suggest a half-work half-study set up so the employers could evaluate the trainees and the trainees could become acclimated to the plant or office. The 85 per cent placement and 2 per cent dropout levels of some past work-study programs for the young should appeal to employers. Vocational administrators might also suggest ways for the employers to get good publicity out of the program. They could stress the potential impact a number of employers could make on the area's unemployment. In line with this effort, employers could be urged to organize other companies to participate with them, thus increasing the impact on the community. In other words, if the employer has a need for trained manpower, there are a number of ways to present a proposal for cooperation.

However, there is a danger that industry will only look for immediate answers. Some employers will expect to get skilled workers trained for existing jobs. This expectation conflicts with the intent of the vocational schools to train for broad careers on the basis of future manpower projections. Therefore, one of the critical responsibilities of the vocational educators will be to work with industry in reorienting its thinking toward long-range manpower projections and creation of broad career jobs. Ironically, while the poor are often accused of being unable to delay gratification, in this case it seems that business is demanding immediate satisfaction with no thought to the future.

For the employers to be most effective in creating job opportunity they must understand the potential, the day-to-day operations and past achievements of the vocational schools. Therefore, the school staff should do its best to familiarize the employers with the educational plans they have developed and their current operations. This is how to actively involve employers and to secure their know-how in areas of the school where their experience is relevant.

## **IV. INVOLVE EMPLOYERS AND UNIONS IN PLANNING**

One of the most critical factors in any training program, but particularly for the disadvantaged, is to work closely with regional employers and unions in operating a project. The importance of this involvement has been proven time and time again. Franklin J. Keller, in *The Comprehensive High School*, stresses emphatically, "a vocational school

worthy of any reputation could no more be operated without such specialized help than a straight academic school could operate effectively without the counseling and upgrading demands of the colleges."<sup>9</sup>

Equally vital is the cooperation of the unions involved. A study of industry-run training programs made by E.F. Shelley & Company found that "In industries generally covered by collective bargaining agreements, the union was not even specifically informed in 51% of the programs surveyed."<sup>10</sup> Often, what happened was that the union leadership acquiesced in the early stages, but later, the rank and file membership began to resist promotion of trainees. "It is clear," the Shelley report goes on to say, "that the union represents a critical factor in the future success of such programs, and, in the words of one top labor relations official, 'will be the big problem a year or two hence when the only people we can get are unskilled blacks.'"<sup>11</sup> Clearly, there is a potential conflict inherent in the likely demands of militant blacks for greater union representation and status and the zealously guarded principles of seniority. This conflict may well be the next arena of racial confrontation. The combination of this strain and probable rank and file resistance to minority workers, argues strongly for union and vocational education cooperation from the start.

### **What Can You Expect from the Union?**

The Shelley study found that industries with the highest level of union participation in planning and operation were railroad equipment, aircraft manufacturing, steel, electrical equipment, air transportation, and metalworking machinery. Most often the unions had agreed to extend the probationary period for hard core employees. Disadvantaged employees were often given union representation after 6 months rather than the usual 30-60 days. This allowed the companies more time to train and evaluate new workers and often prevented unnecessary discharges. Other unions allowed the company to circumvent the probationary period by creating separate non-profit companies for training only—giving the new trainees a running start. The vocational education schools could fill this latter role.

In general, union and employer attitudes are determined largely by the character of the labor market. In a tight market, both are interested in hiring and accepting the disadvantaged. But the unions, like any professional organization, must protect its members' interests. In slack times when the labor supply is ample, they will tend to be less cooperative. At these times, the employers also lose their main incentive, the specific manpower need. These variables are important to bear in mind when choosing a specific type of training and in approaching individual employers and unions for program involvement.

This might also be a good time to work with the unions in finding new ways to prepare workers for journeyman status. In the past, four years of apprenticeship were required after graduation from the vocational schools. It may, however, be possible to bring trainees to journeyman level in a shorter period of time. Vocational educators and employers might be able to set up some experimental programs with union participation to test out a briefer training schedule. In the present period of high labor demand unions will be more receptive to this idea than at any other time.

## **V. WHAT ARE THE WAYS TO INVOLVE EMPLOYERS?**

A number of approaches have been tried over the past few years, some with success and others with little or no



payoff. These methods can be divided into two groups: one—ways of working with groups of employers, and two—ways of working with individual companies.

### **Working with Groups of Employers through Advisory Committees**

Probably most vocational people respond negatively when the industry advisory committee is mentioned. There are approximately 20,000 advisory committees operating today, involving approximately 100,000 industry people.<sup>13</sup> Unfortunately, too many schools and training projects have had little or no payoff from their involvement with these groups of employers. What has gone wrong? Too often the committee has been made up of disinterested management representatives with no stake in the success of the relationship and no authority to make it work. In other cases, the vocational administrators were unclear about what they could expect from the committees and, therefore, made no recommendations and got no results. Other committees failed because the schools did not know how to approach individual companies. This resulted in feeble committees that were not truly representative of the regional employment picture.<sup>14</sup>

Despite this sorry history, the advisory committee remains a useful model. It seems to be a good way to achieve practical participation of industry in training. How can we, therefore, make it work—specifically for the disadvantaged.

A first step could be the formation of a special advisory committee on the disadvantaged, rather than the broadly focused committees of the past. Its main purpose would be to obtain job commitments and plan for the hiring of the disadvantaged. Two recent examples of this kind of effort are the Urban Coalition, and the National Alliance of businessmen. The main function of these associations is to create job opportunities. Similar groups could be founded with this same goal of creating jobs.

**Membership:** A study of advisory committees in 24 cities stresses the critical importance of choosing committee members who will represent the community and participate actively.<sup>15</sup> This means including people who influence job availability, selection criteria and promotion. They should, therefore, be persons at top levels of companies who can make commitments, who have authority to follow through, to allocate other personnel and resources to the effort, and who can influence other companies to get involved with the disadvantaged. The main responsibility of the committee for the disadvantaged should be to create job opportunities. Following the example of the NAB and Urban Coalition, the committee should set target figures and obtain specific hiring commitments from companies. These companies should be encouraged to work closely with individual vocational education schools and their efforts should be publicized.

**Responsibilities:** Apart from this, there is a tremendous variety of opinion on what the committee should do primarily because there are a number of successful models. In a 1967 Report to the Senate Subcommittee on Employment Manpower and Poverty,<sup>16</sup> the following role, developed in Texas, was found to be successful at a number of Jobs Corps Centers. The advisory board participated in two areas—job training and placement. In training, they worked closely on an ongoing basis with instructors in developing curricula and methodology. Their suggestions were usually adopted by the center staff. In placement, each company was committed to hire a quota of disadvantaged. Industry's presence at the training site made clear to the trainees the relationship between their training and the job at the end. The Center's 84% placement rate testifies to the effectiveness of this approach.

At the Philadelphia O.I.C. where many of the disadvantaged have been trained, another major activity of the Advisory Board was to provide modern equipment and experienced teachers.<sup>17</sup> Clearly some of the best equipped teachers will come from the employing companies. They will be up to date on method, new skill requirements, new equipment, etc. Acting as a staff and equipment finder for vocational education and training programs could, therefore, be another responsibility.

Another essential role is in making regional manpower projections. "Education needs an 'early warning system' for job skill needs in order to prepare students for the future not the past."<sup>18</sup> Local plant managers often have no time for projections so this responsibility should be assumed by the advisory board. The board could make the following types of judgements which would influence the type and number of vocational education courses offered.

1. The nature of the employers in the area—which are likely to remain—which are likely to expand. Which are likely to create new and related operations?
2. Implications of technological trends in these industries—which operations will change significantly such as machine tools moving toward tape controlled machines, or the computerization of many banking and finance activities.

This kind of information is essential to immediate placement and long-range vocational education planning. James L. Reid, the Director of Vocational Education in Maryland, testifying before a U.S.E.S. Advisory Committee on Research remarked that "the type of labor market information needed most, and mentioned by practically every state, was for specific job opportunities . . . local, state, regional, and national figures. This type of information is needed on a current and projected basis at a minimum of 3 times a year." It can best come from the employers themselves. The advisory board could assemble such regional data.

In the past industry's projections have not always been accurate. Sometimes plant managers did not know future needs; in other cases they may not have wanted to disclose their future plans. Thus, in working with these projections, educators should allow some flexibility in their planning so that later adjustments can be made if necessary.

### **Working with Individual Employers**

Since the employers are interested in filling special needs in their plants, they are likely to look to the vocational schools to train the disadvantaged for a particular job. While this serves their purposes well, it often handicaps the student who graduates with a non-transferable skill. An important responsibility of vocational education staff would, therefore, be to work with management in developing skill training with a range of applications. This effort would better prepare both the disadvantaged and the traditional student for a labor market characterized by rapid technical change. For the disadvantaged, it would create opportunities for vocational experimentation. General skill training might be grouped as follows:

Building & Construction  
Transportation  
Office Practice  
Food Services

Agriculture  
Industrial Fabrication  
Retail & Distribution

Employers could be helped to plan career ladders within these skill categories. Thus, an employee could move up from his entry job or transfer to another job in the field at the same level. Such career planning could begin to change what appears to be a dangerous situation developing out of the new careers movement. Too often, new employees were promised advancement above the first entry level jobs, from which there really was no escape. If the poor continue to be pushed into these permanent subcellar levels, the situation could be explosive. Already there are

rumblings of discontent from the many minorities who are stymied in subcellar level jobs from which there is no way up, only a way out.

The reorganization of skill training would also help to refine training down to the essentials of skill and knowledge required to do a job. Trainers would begin to communicate with employers about what is really done on a job, what general and specific knowledge is required to do it rather than a general Dictionary of Occupational Titles impression of a job.

One way to get started on this new career planning might be to have industry and educational representatives change places for a period. Each would then see the training problems from the other's point of view. Vocational educators would have to convince employers that this is a logical solution to their long-range manpower problems and one whose cost would be partially allocated to research and development—not just to training.

An example of how this might work in the health occupations is as follows: Many young people are attracted to this field but do not know whether to enter general nursing, physical therapy, X-ray technology, pediatrics, etc. The vocational schools could offer education in physiology, anatomy, patient care, concepts of health service delivery chemistry and so on, while the students learned specific skills on their jobs. It might be feasible to offer this kind of general vocational education in a work-study arrangement where one week in class is followed by one week on a related job. These work-experiences would be an introduction to career jobs. Jobs such as laboratory assistants which involve mostly maintenance of lab equipment would familiarize the student with basic applications of concepts he is learning. Rather than being a menial dead-end job, this could be a short-term introduction to be followed by further training.

The Department of Labor report on Operation Retrieval strongly supports this effort. Quoting from their suggested guidelines for job creation and development:

"The development of new jobs for disadvantaged must involve career development rather than merely job placement. The haste to create 'new jobs for the poor' frequently overlooks the fact that the poor, like the affluent, are not only interested in holding a job but also in what the job means in terms of opportunities for advancement. A created job should not be viewed as a slot to be filled but rather as a starting point in a job network."<sup>19</sup>

However, this undertaking involves still another activity for the vocational schools.

### **Helping Industry Change Job Requirements**

The recent experience of private industry and new careers antipoverty training has made clear that hiring the disadvantaged necessitates changes in selection criteria. The E. F. Shelley Study found that in Considering the Disadvantaged "most firms have relied heavily on the interviewers' ability to determine whether the applicant has a proper attitude. Of those companies responding, 88% consider attitude, and this subjective criterion appears to constitute a primary hiring determinant."<sup>20</sup> Before becoming involved in minority hiring, most companies had relied heavily on testing.

The following chart from the Shelley report shows how many companies altered or eliminated such traditional selection methods as—aptitude, intelligence and psychology tests, educational or reading achievement, and past work history.

### Screening Methods Used for Trainee Recruitment

Method	No. of Programs Reported	%Using Same Standards	%Using Altered Standards	%Eliminating this Method
Aptitude Testing	165	13%	35%	52%
General Intelligence Testing	161	14%	27%	59%
Psychological Testing	133	4%	13%	83%
Educational or Reading Achievement	173	15%	39%	46%
Past Work History	173	17%	54%	29%

At a ghetto based IBM computer component assembly plant, similar steps were taken. Traditional tests were found unsuited to the disadvantaged so selection was on the basis of subjective evaluation of motivation and on a manual dexterity test.

A report on Detroit auto-manufacturing companies indicates that the same changes were made—"Although requirements at the work stations remained unchanged, the companies showed flexibility in changing hiring procedures. In some cases they eliminated tests or conducted hiring interviews off company grounds."<sup>22</sup> Federal Department Store in Cleveland made other modifications with great success. Jobs now in Chicago also achieved these changes in tradition.

The Philadelphia Gas Works experience makes clear that such changes do not necessarily mean a lower quality staff. "The company has not experienced any higher rate of turnover since it dispensed with tests in screening applicants. Turnover for the tested and non-tested groups has been about the same; testing, according to Walter Paul, can not predict turnover. Expense remains the same for Philadelphia Gas Works—but it obtains employees it would not otherwise have."<sup>23</sup>

The Department of Labor Report on Operation Retrieval points out that "a heavily unionized company and a company with an extensive division of labor offered more resistance to modifying entry requirements than other companies. Requirements that are codified in a union contract are particularly hard to change."<sup>24</sup>

Their findings indicated that job developers were most successful in changing requirements in union and non-union companies through gradual shifts over a period of time. In early stages, job developers filled job orders as best as possible and won the confidence of the employers which later enabled them to bring change. The vocational education staff working on placement should be able to win the cooperation and confidence of industry at an early stage. By working closely with Advisory Boards, these changes in selection criteria could be made, at least on an experimental basis, in early planning.



### **Assisting Industry in Stating its Commitment**

Another key element to be discussed with individual employers is the importance of a clearly stated and kept commitment to hire and promote the disadvantaged. Of foremost importance is some kind of statement by the top management level to all employees outlining the company's new involvement with the disadvantaged, the numbers they will hire, and what they expect.

A good example of this management role can be seen at the Philadelphia Gas Works which began an aggressive program for employing the disadvantaged in 1959:

"In that year, General Manager Charles G. Simpson decided not only to promulgate a nondiscriminatory policy, but to make it stick . . . Simpson's first step was to convene a series of meetings with the heads of the company's 12 major departments and with its staff members who handled promotion, transfer, appointment, and hiring. At each he stressed the same points:

1. Hiring minority employees . . . is the law of the land.
2. A non-discriminatory employment policy is morally right.
3. Such a policy makes sound social sense.
4. "I personally will see that your employment with PGW—regardless of your years of employment—is terminated right now if I find in your conduct any signs of discrimination whatsoever."<sup>25</sup>

While he had no illusions that his policy would change minds overnight, he simply said, "Leave your prejudices outside the company." He asked that each month he receive a report from each area noting the percentage of minority workers employed there—"any glaring inequity brings a blunt order from the top to adjust things fast."<sup>26</sup>

While this hard-line style may not suit all company directors, it seems to have been critical in this company's success and suggests that management of other companies should move in this direction.

Some firms may favor strong support from the top along with a series of group sessions for their employees. The E.F. Shelley study found this approach widely used. "83% of the respondent firms say they have launched some kind of special internal training to deal with the hiring of minority group members . . . 38% of the companies are providing some form of sensitivity or attitudinal training . . . (most) seek to provide for the exchange of ideas and attitudes and an opportunity for the presentation of new ideas which will alter or clarify an employee's view of racial issues."<sup>27</sup>

Employers should be urged to present material on the different life style and behavior that may at first characterize the disadvantaged. Many of the factors outlined in the section describing minority groups should be presented and discussed. Co-workers and supervisors should be aware of the new employees' initial unfamiliarity with work routine and the work related matters such as time clocks, coffee breaks, etc. They should further be urged to postpone the hard-line application of traditional performance standards to the hard core. As the unions seem willing to postpone giving representation to new trainees, supervisors and co-workers should be prepared to make allowances in early period of employment.

## **VI. HOW DO YOU AND THE EMPLOYERS GO ABOUT DESIGNING A NEW PROGRAM FOR THE DISADVANTAGED?**

1. See a manpower need in the community that can be filled at entry level or slightly above by the disadvantaged.

**2. Make a feasibility study.**

- Canvass likely employers and unions to get an idea of interest in hiring the disadvantaged for a particular field.
- Determine if type of training is appropriate for disadvantaged in terms of education required at start and for promotion, credentialing, etc.
- Determine how many disadvantaged to be recruited, what age groups, education level, tests to be used, if any, etc.
- Estimate total program cost and cost per trainee.
- Determine relation of program to other existing training both for disadvantaged and traditional students.
- Draw up sequence of training and work, for approval by local and state industrial advisory boards.
- Submit to experts in the field to determine:
  - a) is the need stable?
  - b) what will be the effect of current scientific experimentation on the field?
  - c) are instructors available?
  - d) is work-experience possible in existing companies?

**3. If program agreed upon.**

- Obtain specific job descriptions from employers.
- Work with employers and unions on altering hiring requirements to suit the disadvantaged.
- After consultation with employers, have instructors draw up course content, equipment lists, etc. Submit to employers for approval and decision on work-study possibility.

**4. Plan recruitment and trainee services.**

**5. Determine who is responsible for placement and get firm job commitments from employers.**

**6. Hold pre-program orientation for company staff. Discuss expectations and issues that may arise.**

## **VII. SUMMARY**

The major task for the vocational educators is to convince the employers that cooperation with vocational schools is to their benefit and will not result in the negative experiences of the past. Industry can be made to see that cooperation fulfills a civic responsibility by cooling racial tensions and reversing discrimination. They also will welcome an answer to part of their manpower needs.

In this undertaking, the schools must be aware and must make industry aware that there are no absolute answers to issues of training the disadvantaged. There is, however, a strong body of knowledge from past industry and government supported efforts.

Vocational school staff would do well to familiarize themselves with this information so that they and the employers will become more aware of the central issues in employing the disadvantaged.

Much of the past experience has made us realize that many of these issues can catch the staff in dangerous dilemmas. Too often vocational education administrators and teachers are caught between two sides, each making insistent and often angry demands. As the dilemma continues, each side frequently hardens its position, making a resolution more difficult. For instance, there is often a conflict between the need to train students for competence and the need to give them the training necessary for credentials. On the one hand, the schools look to the future job market and, on the other, they consider present hiring requirements and licensing laws.

Another type of problem arises when the interests of two groups on the work site are divergent. The union may resist changes in entry criteria which undermine their members' authority. At the same time the employers push the changes in order to get sufficient manpower. Program administrators may be caught in the middle and never get a program off the ground. Other types of dichotomies may appear to force the schools into choosing between technological or academic oriented curricula, between black and white, between taking winners or losers, between being supportive or punitive.

The danger of these situations is that they appear to demand a choice on one side or the other. Representatives from each side seem to be unwilling to compromise. In addition, a compromise solution may appear to be no solution at all. However, most often both sides of the dichotomy represent valid needs.

To choose one to the exclusion of the other is to totally ignore and often alienate an important element or partner in a program. In very few cases are needs congruent but in most cases they all require some satisfaction.

The challenge to vocational educators is to create solutions which partially satisfy needs on both sides of the dichotomy. There are no easy answers on how to do this. Rather it is a painstaking task of sorting and setting priorities. It will involve arbitrating between the many interest groups involved in vocational education for the disadvantaged—the students, industry, educators, trainers, union leadership, rank and file employees. It is this kind of skillful management that is required in turning vocational education and job opportunity to the disadvantaged.

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INVOLVING THE COMMUNITY  
IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FOR THE DISADVANTAGED

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A special issue of the *Journal of Negro Education*, published in the summer of 1968, stated:

"Such words and phrases as . . . community involvement or participation are constantly used. They may mean different things to different people . . . (obscuring) . . . ultimate goals."<sup>1</sup>

Since meaningful vocational education is our goal, the immediate task must be to clarify our working definitions of "community" and "community involvement", which are indeed obscured at present. Charles V. Willie's article, "New Perspectives in School Community Relations"<sup>2</sup> provides an excellent introduction to this discussion. Willie states: "It is generally recognized that the local values and traditions which schools have transmitted to children are the values and traditions of some of the people—the dominant people of power—and not the values and traditions of all the people."<sup>2</sup> Society is made up of dominant and sub-dominant groups and "harmonizing their conflicting interests is the major task in school-community relations now confronting the educational establishment in local communities throughout the nation."<sup>2</sup> "Dominants tend to move at a slow pace." This, compounded with "administrations who attempt to deal with school-community problems as educational issues only," leads to the clear conclusion "the reason for separating the races in the first place is to accord them differential treatment."<sup>2</sup> Now the subdominants have surfaced with a vengeance. They "wish the schools to serve their interests in social reform."<sup>2</sup> Redress to improve their inferior status is actively and sometimes violently sought by them.

The Kerner report,<sup>3</sup> gospel to many of us engaged in our chosen field of social engineering, has demonstrated that the "subdominant group is emerging as unequal in the steady movement toward the separation of the races." The recent report, "One Year Later," an assessment of America's response to the Kerner report by Urban America and the Urban Coalition, emphasizes the drift of the nation toward these "two nations—separate and unequal."<sup>4</sup> Conditions in the ghetto rapidly grow worse. The very survival of minority citizens is at stake. We avoid plain talk about our society at a terrible risk. We dare not plunge into our subject without clearly understanding these realities.

The overwhelming virtue of the Kerner report rests in its capacity to provide us with a mirror to observe what is being adjusted to correct the inequities described in its devastating reproach to America. It is plain that unless there is a reversal in the trend toward separateness we will experience a conflagration whose outcome we simply cannot entertain. Our purpose must be to correct the inequities, and, within this context, vocational educators must restructure youth training. Vocational education must make a powerful and positive response to community demands for improvement.

## THE COMMUNITY

For the purpose of this paper, community, as we have said, means non-whites. Our direct experiences and our major readings have been in and about the black community. (We have some acquaintance with the status of Indians and Mexican-Americans.) One of our charges in writing this paper is to pinpoint those things with which the minority community is forced to deal incessantly, but which the whites ignore.

We began with references from an article appearing in the *Journal of Negro Education*. To many blacks, the editorial opinion, the kind of "research" papers presented there, are as offensive as articles in the *American Vocational Journal*. You will never identify within this minority community a point of view or a set of leaders who

can authenticate themselves as the single spokesman for these discrete and varying sets of individuals, groups, and attitudes. It is the fantasy of the social engineers, both white and non-white, that an agreement can be reached, a deal made, with a particular group, which then becomes binding on every other non-white. We hear daily the whites calling for responsible Negro leadership to disavow "this and that." It cannot be done.

It should be made clear that we do not represent, nor does there exist, any monolithic black point of view: the sub-dominant community is divided into classes, castes and contains a variety of ideologies. As vocational educators you find yourselves dealing with parents, students, professions, the unemployed, the under-employed, etc. All of them are the community, and no one within it can speak for all.

## **THE COMMUNITY'S STAKE IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION**

The minorities place a huge burden on both school and non-school vocational education institutions in the preparation of their youth for employment. The lack of minority owned businesses or minority control of any area of financial importance means that non-marketplace opportunities for minority employment simply are not there. The educational institutions are virtually the sole avenue for employment for the masses of black youth, the unemployed and the underemployed. As technological change accelerates, minorities are placed in an increasingly deteriorating position, that is, as a result of discrimination they possess fewer skills and enjoy fewer opportunities in the job market. Grant Venn of the U.S. Office of Education has written:<sup>5</sup>

"The new technology has removed the margin for educational error. Historically the number and kind of jobs available for the under-educated permitted schools and colleges a 'margin of error' in planning educational opportunities. Today, however, the inability of a technological society to make full use of uneducated individuals narrows the margin to the point where the repercussions of each educational failure can be felt throughout the entire society."

A fair summary of the minority community's dependence on Vocational Education.

Despite the minority community's greater need for meaningful programs the evidence indicates that they are getting inferior vocational educations.

What is actually happening in the programs of two large cities, for example, substantiates Willie's contention that the races are separated in order to ensure and deliver "differential treatment."

### **CLEVELAND**

In Cleveland a wave of protest is presently being directed toward the academic high school system, although the protest is not being specifically aimed at the vocational system. On a recent visit to Cleveland we saw considerable resentment in the community toward the vocational education system. Eric Hawkins, community organizer for Superior Area Community Action, bitterly pointed out that the mainly white Mays Vocational Education School is vastly superior to Edison, the predominantly black Vocational Education School. Hawkins rattled off some examples of the contrasting curricula in the two schools:



### **Mays (White)**

Tool and Die  
Advanced Mechanical Engineering  
TV Courses in Repair & Station Management  
Aero Dynamics  
Automatic Transmission

### **Edison (Black)**

Shoe Repair  
Woodwork  
Building Maintenance  
Occupational Work Experience  
Small Engine Mechanic

Hawkins gave us copies of Edison's newspaper which "proudly" announced what the OWE, Occupational Work Experience program, had obtained as training slots for Edison youth.

"1. D.F. 12B works at Petrie's Clothing Shop. He has been there for eight months.

"2. C.C. also works at Petrie's. His job is to check stock, run elevator and clean shop.

"3. D.G. works at Sohio gas station, works on cars, keeps the place clean, etc."

In contrast, not only is Mays' curricula vastly superior but all of the apprenticeship programs are operated at Mays. The majority gets the programs—and the minority needs the programs.

### **NEWARK**

In Newark, Andy Washington, Education Director for Newark CORE cites the 40% unemployment rates for 16-19 year old minority youth that have remained steady despite near-by Camp Kilmer, Urban Job Corps Center and the Essex County Vocational Education Occupations Institutions which is attached to the new Essex County College. His general observation is similar to most observations about vocational education schools:

"The vocational education program in Essex County is generally poor because most of the jobs for which vocational education students, the minority students that is, are trained for—are no longer needed when the student graduates and in reality were obsolete when the students entered the program. Are you kidding, there is no community representation at the Job Corps, at Newark Vocational Technical High School nor the school out at Essex County College. So they don't have to care what happens to our kids. I know there are white kids at Kilmer getting the same shafting but I can only worry about the black kids at this point. For instance here in Newark the black kids have to go to the lousy Newark Vocational Technical High because the good ones are in the all white suburbs."

To avoid the kind of situations we see in Cleveland and Newark it is, of course, mandatory to work with the community. In New York we have contrasting examples of two programs, one of which successfully involved the community who were able to make a creative response to relations between education officials and themselves; and another program which failed because it bypassed the community.

The United Bronx Parents Committee, a coordinating committee in the Bronx community, tempered by their experiences with the establishment, has developed an effective program. Assisted by professionals, they have created materials and curricula for training the community to deal with the "intricate obfuscations" of the education establishment. During the recent community control struggle in New York City, this group, using the materials they have developed, trained their people to participate in the city-wide hearings on decentralization where they made

substantial input. Their training enabled them to effectively present the needs and demands of the community. Currently the United Bronx Parents Committee is engaged in many forms of community struggle. For example, they are intervening in behalf of a high school student suspended for distributing a leaflet on school premises.

An interesting contrast to United Bronx Parents Committee is Mobilization For Youth. Initially the program seemed impressive because of the "profound" response it appeared to be making to the challenge of community involvement. However, many recognized in the early days of MFY not merely its inadequacy, but the mischief it created in pretending change. The work program transmitted contempt for minorities by issuing certificates of vocational competence where none existed; they "initiated" the regular public relations practice of all nonschool vocational education programs in inventing statistics. Although highly regarded by outsiders, in our view MFY never really related to the community and never really tried to.

### WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

In *American Vocational Journal's* February 1969 issue, Mr. Floyd Johnson, immediate past president, said: "... Observed the student unrest ... the tragic problem ... in rural and urban areas (with no education and training for jobs) ... signs point toward the need for more and better programs of vocational education ... Are we ready, willing and able to accept this challenge? What do we need to do? ... How must we change; ... Where do we begin? ... "6,

What must happen, in our view, on professional vocational education's side to fulfill Mr. Johnson's imperatives? What is expected of you and your programs? We see three broad areas:

- (1) Program Content
- (2) Personnel
- (3) Reciprocal Relations (that will evolve between the professional vocational education community and the minority community)

### PROGRAM CONTENT

There can be no substitute for first class programs—nothing else will do. If, in fact, there is a genuine desire by vocational educators to finally deal with the minority community's needs, what must be available are good substantive programs, identical to those in the white schools. The curricula in the white schools is based in modern, well-paid craft choices. As we indicated in our comparison between the white and nonwhite vocational education schools of Cleveland, the actual employment opportunities resulting are at two opposite extremes. Experience has shown the minority community that their vocational educated youth will probably not move into the job slots for which they have been trained. It is no wonder then that the entire complex of training in the minority school feeds the inclinations to despair and the desire to "chuck it all."

Do not detract from the real issues by introducing a few courses in black history. Such courses when integrated with sound vocational education training capacity are obviously a need today. But do not imagine that announcements of

black history programs can serve as substitutes for quality programs.

## **PERSONNEL**

Administrators must select top quality personnel for their staffs. The subtleties of racism (frequently represented by the insistence that minority students can't learn) must be challenged day by day. In-staff training sessions to route out such tendencies should be increased or instituted if there are none. Another tendency which must be combatted is the tragic racism displayed by some minority personnel, who have the desire to ingratiate themselves and enter the fanciful world of the dominants.

It is generally accepted that an increase in minority personnel is a crucial ingredient in improving the total educational effort. Images from the students' ethnic group are doubtless incentives of some merit. But what is needed beyond this is the inclusion of minority personnel in policy level positions of both particular institutions and in those professional bodies such as the American Vocational Association which influence the performances of education plants.

In reading from issues of the past two years of the American Vocational Association Journal there are many impressions, but the most searing one that persisted was the absence of brown and black faces. There were other impressions but this lack of minority faces really connects the Kerner and the One Year Later reports in the sense of that pervasive insensitivity which is so prevalent.

## **RELATIONS WITH THE COMMUNITY**

The differentiation within the community proscribes any but the most general rules about identifying components in the community with which vocational education must deal. We know that there will be community representation knocking on your door. The particular brief presented by the activist may or may not have merit. Your job will require a skillful assessment of each group's concern. You must ask yourselves what each group can contribute to a solution of the problems.

In anticipation, we can see a variety of community forms:

- a. Any community group, which has devoted its continuous energies to school problems.
- b. Student organizations seeking seeking a relationship with the administration of vocational education programs.
- c. Civil Rights groups (CORE, Urban League, NAACP, etc.) are helpful in identifying persons and groups within the community whose chief concerns are education.
- d. Minority professional groups and business groups are frequently interested in what role they can play in improving community-school relations.
- e. Parents, either singly or as a group.\*
- f. Militants and the activists.

\*(One Year Later report makes an interesting point in this regard. "Few parents really want to 'run' the schools," it points out they do want to look at what the school is accomplishing.")

Funds for a community liaison should be allocated with the same priority given to staff salaries. The community liaison person should have staff status and his job requirements specified so that his responsibilities are unequivocal. He must not be made a front man used only in time of crisis. A primary job responsibility would be coordinating a cross sectional group composed of representation from the groups indicated above. This insures an initial input of a broad community representation.

Paraprofessionals, usually community people who have proven their talents and sensitivity in dealing with community—because they are an authentic part of it—should be involved. It is also wise to seek out the minority consultant firms which have begun to mushroom. Some will be competent, others incompetent. Exchanges even with incompetent minority consultants may yield secondary insights not possible when all the members of the 'problem' team are whites.

Consider carefully, and be inventive in using your funds to employ minority businesses that exist in the community, such as contractors, repairmen et al. In a few cities, the nonvocational education people have initiated such business efforts with excellent results.

On the state level, the vocational director should encourage the state advisory committee to hold their meetings in the disadvantaged community so that community residents may have contact with the policy makers. It is our opinion that a basic reason these vocational education programs are not as good as they might be is due to the lack of minority community involvement on any important decision making level. Your responsibility as administrators is to have a conceptual framework in which all parts function to solve problems. Remember that you now have a mandate from the community and must answer to them. Your accountability is no longer only to the Board of Education—it now includes the group you are serving.

There will be problems, too, in reaching the community and dealing with them. At first they may be suspicious: they have been rejected in the past, and will be reacting to that past experience. Recognize that you will have difficulties over and over. Sometimes the same ones may occur and recur. Be patient and persistent. The community will doubt you and you will have to prove yourself.

Special effort may be required in developing respect for community opinion. There is a thin line separating each side's acting out their veto powers: The burning of the minority communities and the inevitable threat that they may spread to other areas is obviously the use of veto power by community forces; administrations exercise their veto power in community-school relations in refusing to accept those demands which will improve education for minority youth.

A deeper identification with the lot of the poor is desperately needed. Our training institutions, in their lustful efforts to be judged as efficient creatures, have quickly become bureaucracies. That bureaucratization is manifestly clear in their identification with the business interests as against the individuals for whom they should be advocates. The vocational education establishment must seek ways to shift that identification and be prepared to fight for increased wages and, equally important, to refuse to send trainees on jobs at the minimum wage after the completion of training programs.

The educational establishment must face the reality of an emerging minority group whose singular history of oppression uniquely sets it off from any other ethnic minority trying to enter the mainstream of American life.

Many administrators are seriously puzzled over what one does now. Out of this puzzle will come delays, even when genuine effort is attempted. Nevertheless community demands across the land are increasing; the outcome of these struggles will demonstrate what a minority group can hope to attain after monstrous years of deceit.



It is with some pleasure that we report on the recent events in Plainfield, New Jersey. There the Board of Education stated that it was "willing to listen to requests for revisions of educational process in the city." The program offered "Negro high school students. . . . to meet (their) grievances" (N.Y. Times 3/13/69) embraced some of the points made in this paper. Much of the program was couched in evasive and "dominant" language, of course. Nevertheless there is a gain: more Negro history, in-service training for teachers in order to correct "insensitivity", and the addition of "school-community" coordinators. We see these as positive efforts, piecemeal of course, to harmonize conflicting interests." We can only pray that the remaining demands be swiftly and honestly attended.

## FOOTNOTES

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VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FOR THE DISADVANTAGED:  
LESSONS FROM  
FORD FOUNDATION FUNDED PROGRAMS

by  
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Technological changes, intrinsic to an industrial society, are now unprecedented in scope and rapidity. Not since World War II, when rapid effective technical training for the armed forces and for wartime industry was a matter of national survival, has interest in vocational and technical education been as intense as it is today. To meet this need, the Ford Foundation has had a small, financially limited program in vocational and technical education since 1963. The program is designed to assist and encourage improved means of preparing American youth for productive careers in a rapidly changing labor market and motivating them to greater educational accomplishment. I think it would be worthwhile to quote the announcement the Ford Foundation made upon entering the field of vocational education. In 1963 the Foundation stated:

*"Vocational education has been the stepchild of the American educational system since it was introduced at the turn of the century. Traditionally schools have been in a better position to train students for college than for vocations. This is partly because business, industry, and formal education have not been able to reach a clear understanding of their respective roles in fitting modern youth for the modern labor market. Now, as the pace of technological change is constantly quickening, the demand for special knowledge and skills is mounting. At the same time more young people are unemployed because they are unskilled or because they have the wrong skills for the new age. A rational, effective system of vocational education is needed (a system that) is an integral part of education, particularly at all levels of secondary and post-secondary education (which is the) responsibility of all educators, academic and general as well as vocational."*

To get a clearer understanding of how the Foundation decides upon support for programs in vocational education you must understand that the program of vocational education is part of a larger program of public education in the Foundation's division of international education and research. In our program of public education, our staff has a set of common themes which include: 1) democratic participation; 2) personalized learning; 3) accountability.

These three themes complement each other; they are, in fact, interdependent. Together, they describe a total change in present school environment: from individuals bending to the needs of a system to a system that cultivates and serves individuality. It is within this program that vocational education finds its support.

Within the specific program of vocational education, grants have been given in four general areas which include: the improvement of curricula (particularly prevocational); research development and information, vocational-technical teacher training; and articulation between secondary and post-secondary vocational programs, including cooperative work-study education.

### THE NEED FOR A SYSTEM

Once we look past the obvious, we see it is impossible to study vocational education without realizing there is really no *system* of vocational education. There are schools of all kinds at all educational levels, but there is no *system* with a logical progression from school to school and from level to level. For sixty years, vocational education has been confused with practical training required for a job and has been regarded as separate and distinct from "education." It is associated with manual occupations and is thought of as inherently inconsistent with the ideal of higher education for all pupils. We give the students to vocational education when we have given up on them as students. We say that we want vocational education for students who do not have the ability for college rather than using the vocational processes themselves to help develop this ability.

Secondary school students today must choose between "education for life" or vocational education. Is there such a thing as "life" in general? A vocation itself is a way of life. Therefore, can "education for life" ignore the concept of one's life work? It is for these reasons, as well as others, that vocational educators are reluctant to embrace the notion of comprehensive high schools generally.

The essential question is not whether we should merge general and vocational education but rather how we can best exploit vocational education techniques in the interest of effective teaching. Culturally and economically deprived American students most likely would be the immediate beneficiaries of a comprehensive system since these

students, above all others, have been largely untapped by contemporary educational techniques. But comprehensive education is of value to students whose primary interest may be the liberal arts. When a youngster is provided with an opportunity to design, to fabricate, to test, and to report on an item, he goes through a number of behavioral changes not unlike the processes within the liberal arts. The vocational process surely could be used in this way as a great tool in liberating the mind for self-expression.

A basic fault in our present theory and practice of education is the idea that vocational education is a dull body of specific, technical facts and manipulative functions standing apart from humanistic studies. To say that vocational education must become the principal core of a modern curriculum is to say only that the remainder of the curriculum must be more fully and more consciously related to the place of individual talent in human life.

Such a system would introduce awareness of the relationships which exist between schooling and work--how man supports himself through work, how various occupations use knowledge--beginning in the elementary grades. It would use tools, materials, and activities, until now principally associated with vocational education, to provide concrete, nonverbal complements to the generally abstract-verbal performance standards of conventional education. It would serve as a vehicle to show various kinds of knowledge and concepts in action settings. It would also promote respect for varying individual talents and capabilities.

In the middle school years, more intensive consideration of the relationships among school work, individual abilities, and the opportunities and demands of various career fields would provide awareness of how options in later life may be expanded or limited by performance and choice. From this period on, each student might have a personal inventory of interests, abilities, and achievement designed to keep before him a full picture of the paths open to him and subject to continual revision in the light of his further progress and development.

In junior and senior high school, the coordinated curriculum approach embodied in several of the projects would be employed to lend reality and a sense of purpose to education for all students, including the college-bound, and to equip those not planning on college with marketable skills without foreclosing the prospect of continuing education after high school. A major purpose would be to eliminate the so-called "general" curriculum which neither prepares students for useful work upon graduation, nor equips them adequately for further education. Another would be to refocus purely vocational content toward more generally useful skills and concepts in line with the emerging shape of the job market.

At the post-secondary level, career preparation would continue but curricula would be designed also to enable students to advance to four-year college and university courses.

The Foundation believes that such a program, properly designed and implemented, could offer richer content for the intellectually inclined, stimulation for the able but indifferent, and new doors to greater achievements for those whose abilities do not find expression in conventional classroom exercises. In short, it could make education even more effective, humane, and socially productive than it is today.

#### FOUNDATION GRANTS

Most of the vocational programs supported by the Ford Foundation have a number of characteristics in common. The projects tend to opt for an earlier introduction to occupational concepts but to delay provisions for specific occupational skills. They endorse a blending of basic general and vocational education, flexibly shaped to individual interests and needs. They seek to broaden the range of occupations for which an individual is prepared; and they assume change and the need for adaptability and continuous refurbishing of skills.

Each of our projects reflects a major contemporary issue in vocational education. Enrollments in post-secondary education are rising rapidly. High school students have limited experience upon which to base vocational choices. School hours are limited, and valuable general preparation for life is often sacrificed in order to gain specific preparation for a job. Vocational education is expensive, and losses are considerable when it is not used. The skills which can be provided in secondary school courses are limited, and many of the more rapidly growing technical occupations



are almost precluded. All of these reasons present sound arguments for introducing comprehensive vocational education in schools and for delaying preparation for specific occupations until after high school.

On the other hand, here in the United States about three out of five youths still receive no formal post-secondary training, and one out of four fails to complete high school. There is anxiety to assure a saleable skill to the school-leaver. Despite the high drop-out rate for vocational students, who tend to be drawn from drop-out prone populations, there exists an assumption that occupationally-oriented education could, at its best, possess sufficient relevance to raise the school retention rate significantly. Experimental programs we have supported have attempted simultaneous solutions to this variety of interrelated problems. We have hoped to acquaint students with the nature of the work world in elementary schools and motivate them to absorb general education by molding it around a core of occupational skills or training for broad job families or clusters rather than specific occupations. Experimentation in skill upgrading and remedial education and training has been sponsored largely by the federal manpower and anti-poverty programs rather than by the Ford Foundation.

### EARLY UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD OF WORK

The programs that provide an understanding of the work world are:

*Technology for Children* project of the New Jersey State Department of Education, the Nova Schools in Florida, and the "American Industries" project at Stout State University in Wisconsin. The New Jersey program introduces as early as kindergarten an exposure to the workings of the economy and the nature of occupations within it. As a bonus, in addition to increasing the realism of vocational choice, it is hoped that the students will gain a general understanding of economic realities and will find all learning more relevant.

In grades one through six, the *Nova* children in Florida are introduced to a wide range of employment-related experiences through tools, mechanical devices, and games. In grades seven through twelve, the program becomes more directive. In grades seven and eight, the student is exposed to fundamental concepts of technology, and a variety of introductory alternatives and career requirements. Specialization increases in grades nine through twelve, but encouragement is constantly offered to remain in school as long as the student can profit from further education. All experiences and decisions are structured so as not to pose obstacles to continuation. The objective is to develop confidence, knowledge, and skills within a family of occupations, enhancing the immediate employability of the student, yet holding the door open to continued education and training. Learning experiences are individualized. The teaching of concepts and reliance upon problem solving as a teaching technique are emphasized. Progress is measured by achievement of competency rather than time in any particular phase of the program.

The *American Industries* projects begins at the eighth grade rather than in elementary school. However, its objectives are similar. From a general understanding of the major concepts of industry and technology and simple problem-solving techniques, the student is to progress in his ability to recognize and solve complex industrial problems within broad concept areas and clusters of concepts appropriate to the individual's interests and abilities.

### RELATING VOCATIONAL AND ACADEMIC EDUCATION

Programs that mold academic and vocational education are best described with the following projects:

The San Mateo project has developed a "zero reject" concept for curriculum planning. The assumption is that with proper teaching techniques every student can earn a high school diploma with significant standards and a broad liberal and vocational education. The schools accept the responsibility for seeing that students are employable whenever they choose to leave school, whether as a drop-out from grade ten, or with a doctorate. Occupations are grouped by clusters and by levels which form ladders of progression throughout the educational experience. Academic disciplines, it is argued, should be established for the convenience of teaching and understanding rather than in standard "watertight compartments" adopted largely for the convenience of administration. The intent is to state performance objectives clearly and mix discipline components to fit the student's own individualized learning strategy.

The Partnership Vocational Education Project at Central Michigan University is a joint effort among the university, the secondary schools, community colleges, and industry of Mount Pleasant, Michigan. The project employs a teaching team for math, science, English, and industrial education. The program begins in the early middle school and continues through the university, serving all individuals with industrial, technical aptitudes and interests. It is structured on three levels: 1) a college-bound upper mobility group; 2) an intermediate level group who may choose to enter the labor force after high school or who may advance to the community college or university; 3) a low verbal ability group of students who are likely to enter the labor force even before graduation from high school. However, no student is permanently locked into any one of the three levels, and each may shift to another level, according to his interests and aptitudes.

The program at each level uses the vocational interests of the students as a motivating force for a sound educational program, but the vocational interest does not result in a vocational deadend. Occupational and personal guidance is emphasized to familiarize youngsters with the industrial-technical occupations and higher educational opportunities open to them, including the building of realistic aspirational levels. It is argued that motivation, particularly of individuals from lower socioeconomic levels, is directly related to the immediacy of the reward and the relationship of the task to its achievement. Therefore, formal education is related as directly as possible to the personal goals of the individual. A problem-solving approach attempts to give meaning to formal education. The students develop capability in the identification of meaningful tasks, the selection of appropriate knowledge and skills and their application to the solution of problems.

The Pre-technology Program (also known as the "Richmond Plan" or the "Pre-tech Program"), now used widely throughout the San Francisco Bay area has as its target population the average capable but undermotivated student who is achieving below his ability. The program is especially structured for an area in which the majority of students obtain some education beyond the high school, specifically in the technical institute. The immediate occupational goal is that of the engineering technician. However, care is taken in curriculum planning and through cooperative relations with the state college system to assure that the graduates are qualified for the latter, if their motivation is revived. Though broadly rather than narrowly prepared, the students are in high demand by the employers in the area. Curriculum units are planned by a teaching team around a core technical project provided by the industrial arts instructor. Each instructor from the areas of math, language, and science then structures his offering around that project, stressing their interrelatedness.

This project has proven the effectiveness of the interdisciplinary, employment-oriented approach in achieving a variety of occupational goals. Approximately 40 schools in the San Francisco Bay area have adopted the approach, applying it to twelve different occupational goals. One of the most interesting and successful, has been Project FEAST (Food, Education and Service Technology) which prepares students for commercial food and hospitality occupations. Though enrolling students of all ability levels, it has been especially effective and appropriate for those of less than average verbal ability. The disciplines drawn upon are home economics, science, English and mathematics. Close ties with the Hotel and Restaurant Foundation at San Francisco City College have assured both employment and further education opportunities to the students involved.

Since the inception of the FEAST project in 1964, the number of participating schools has multiplied from two California high schools to 24 high schools in California, Nevada and Washington. There has been an eleven-fold increase in student enrollment. Currently, about 800 students are in training and over 300 have been graduated.

The New York public schools have worked on a correlated curriculum project for three years beginning the 8th grade.

The Education Development Center (in Newton, Mass.) has received a Foundation grant to examine the need for instructional materials.

## WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

What have we learned from our programs in vocational education and its relevance to the disadvantaged? I want to be careful that you understand that I am speaking as an individual about what we have learned and this is what I personally believe. I say this because only two programs have been thoroughly evaluated — the Pre-tech projects, through the Stanford Research Institute, and the New York City public schools program. Both evaluations have shown that the processes of interdepartmental instruction, where the vocational processes are made relevant to the academic disciplines, are right and proper, but there is a severe need for alternative curriculum options which we are now exploring. The rest of the projects are still under one kind of evaluation or another but I think there are enough generalities emerging for me to make some overall comments.

In the first place, vocational education has a serious and important message to deliver in the education of the poor for reasons that are even more important than the fact that it does provide economic mobility. Underlying the entire concept of our projects is the notion that intelligence is not fixed and can be developed by providing the child with enough interaction with his environment — interaction that is relevant to the early experience and psychological development and that is particularly applicable to the poor child. A great deal of learning is based on experience. We now believe we must create the experiences upon which to build the learning. The experiences will come from those programs now defined as industrial or vocational education. We often lose sight, however, of the fact that doing is only the beginning — thinking-follows-feeling-follows-doing is the specific from which later generalizations will follow. We in vocational education can provide a high proportion of doing if it were used properly for comprehensive education purposes. Without such processes it is doubtful that we can intervene in the experiential base of the poor child.

The processes of vocational education require the student's active participation and greatly enhance his motivation to learn. They help relate his educational experience to any number of adult roles as well, which are particularly applicable to the poor. Throughout the elementary grades, then, we have a mission, which is to continue examining how man uses work for self-support; how major occupations employ knowledge and how productivity is related to a variety of abilities. Since the major objective of elementary education is to discover the talents of each child, it is our mission to demonstrate their relationship to the work world. We must take this mission; if we don't, who will?

In an effective comprehensive program, we now believe, youngsters would be introduced to the concept of choice between achievement through verbal or abstract performance and achievement through manipulation and demonstration of real objects. Work processes would be designed to arrive at the same goals. What is necessary in the education of the poor child in inner cities is the need for each unit of work in language arts to begin with a self-directed experience matched to individual readiness levels. The issue here is that we must create a successful elementary experience because it enhances a child's self-esteem and lays the groundwork for later learning. The way to achieve the kind of education in which no child fails is to identify his style of learning and deliberately enhance his talent. This is a mission you must volunteer for. Let me expand on that.

The elementary school role is diagnostic and prescriptive. It should provide whatever experiences a child may need to make learning real. It is pointless to read "Billy builds a boat," if a child has never built one nor even seen one. It is even more pointless to change the name of Billy to Willy, color his skin black, and place the story in an urban environment, as some publishers are now beginning to do. In other words, when children are learning new skills, such as reading, the process does not need to be complicated by their also having to learn new information at the same time. Yet, never having built or seen a boat is no barrier to learning. Either you let the child first build a boat himself or have him read about things with which he is already familiar. The school simply must take the social fact into account and prescribe accordingly. But the prescription cannot be filled without the resources of vocational education in the elementary school. Under the new legislation, you have a serious mission and that is to provide the experiences necessary for poor children to learn.



Few elementary schools teach science, math, languages and technology in a systematic way based on the child's style of learning. Yet the elementary school is the place to teach these subjects rather than in the junior high school where they are now taught. This is because the young child learns such things better and faster than he will later when he is going through the most severe emotional and physical changes of his life.

Vocational education has a distinct mission in middle school education if we are concerned again with education for the poor. You must provide vocational guidance early in middle school years. The aim here is to acquaint the student with the workings of industry and commerce and to help him begin to match his talents with career objectives. A vocational guidance department must be created for the middle school years to provide an annual career objective analysis for each student, based on the diagnoses, discussions, predictions, and evaluations of teachers, examinations, and computers. These analyses, really employment plans if put in the hands of vocational educators, are necessary, and you have to revise them annually to enable the student to appreciate the relevance of his school performance to his career possibilities.

The middle school is the school of early adolescence. Here is the time to teach literature, music, art, and the social skills. The major purpose of the middle school should be to calm the anguish of early adolescence. Nevertheless, it is necessary that the child be given an opportunity to see what adults who share his qualities do in society, what jobs they have, what goals they pursue. The upper middle school years, the junior high years, are also the place, I believe, for more intensive exploration of careers, which is high in an adolescent's concern. Who am I going to be? What am I going to do? The school must help each student explore roles through simulated experiences related to his school studies and to his special talents and interests. You have a very serious mission to perform in the middle school if you are seriously going to tackle the problem of education for the poor.

The high school, and the idea behind my earlier remarks about comprehensive education, are not simply to fit vocational education into the existing system, but to make it the principal feature of a new system of urban education. The plan depends upon an extensive redesign of the secondary school curriculum. The usual high school curriculum is a disaster, especially when it consists of tracks that lead either to college, or to office work, or to manual trades.

Many recent efforts in education, including vocational education, have in the main failed. They have failed because they are at bottom peripheral; they have been placed in a crumbling model of education whose basic strategies are out-of-date, out-of-touch, and out-of-balance.

An education program today must have "zero reject" as its overarching goal. No student should be allowed to fail. Moreover, schools must be held accountable by students, their parents, and society for the achievement of this goal.

Educators must become sensitive to the needs of the disadvantaged student. We need to seriously address ourselves to the development of spokesmen and leaders in our field with the sensitivity to respect both minority and majority life styles. Finally, we must realize that our position can no longer be "When they are ready for us, we will be ready for them." We are all of us long overdue.



**REVIEW OF CASE PRESENTATION  
MATERIALS AND TECHNIQUES**

by

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Presented at the

**NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FOR THE DISADVANTAGED**

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**NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT OF YOUTH**

**145 East 32nd Street**

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There is today an unprecedented demand—and a corresponding reaction—for the development and implementation of basic and highly sophisticated teaching materials and devices. This changeover from the more traditional textbook and lecture methodology is taking place on all levels of education—the elementary schools, the secondary schools and the colleges of our nation in all areas of education—academic, technical, vocational and in-service training sponsored by the business world at large.

This overall transition has been brought about by some obvious changes in the school population of our nation and by the developments in the communications media of the world. Since the late 1920s the American educational system has become one dedicated to mass education. Educators must now deal with students whose general intelligence, interest and motivation rest on a level below that of students in earlier generations. This necessitates drastic changes in the methods and techniques used to educate the public.

The explosion which has taken place in mass communication has made the general public and the educational world aware of the superiority of visual and audial means of relating ideas once relegated only to the printed page. The skilled and imaginative intellects applied to the communications arts of the commercial world have set standards of effective communications which educators find difficult to compete with as they seek to retain the interest of the “tuned in” generation.

Research by behavioral psychologists has given definition and authentication to the psychological barriers to learning with which teachers must contend. New measurements have been taken of the effects of excessive verbalism, disinterest, boredom and referent confusion. Even linguistic science has contributed to the evidence that there is a constant and unending variety of obstacles which interrupt the process of perceiving and truly understanding verbal symbols. Once recognition of this fact existed in education among the lower elementary school teachers only. It was here that optimum visual aids were employed. In the upper grades word symbols replaced the pictures and other materials. With this changeover there was often a concomitant diminution of learning—undoubtedly the result of the psychological barriers. This educational transition, traditionally inherent in our school system, this reliance upon word symbols, probably is the answer to many a parent who reflects inquiringly that his child did so well in grade school but suddenly has encountered insurmountable obstacles in secondary education and wants to leave school. The fact that the child learned to read has tempted educators to debilitate and diminish their teaching efforts by over-reliance upon the printed text and the lecture. How can we judge the effects of these methods in cases where the child did not learn to read but was subjected to the same verbal teaching process as he was passed on to higher grades? It is reassuring that educators have taken a long hard look at the methods that tradition has developed. The limitation of excessive verbalism has been slow in actual application, however.

The statements above constitute the rationale for the more effective use of teaching materials and devices in our educational system. The points made can be found in most good up-to-date textbooks dealing with the problems of teaching. Indeed, they are a tour de force for revitalizing teaching techniques especially in terms of instructional materials.

However the concern is not with the accepted “normal” school situation. What is to be related concerns people seeking to be instructed who for many reasons could not be categorized among average students. At the Newark Manpower Training Skills Center the profile of a typical trainee will show that he has not succeeded in the world of learning and subsequently has failed in the world of work—or has attained such limited success that he feels that he has failed. He is generally in his 20s and reads at an elementary grade level. He is not financially independent. His

poor self image, due to these limitations, contributes immeasurably to psychological barriers to learning in addition to those blocks already existent.

Too often it is assumed that individuals exhibiting the characteristics of our trainees can learn through strictly verbal means from the start of their training. The substitution of non-verbal cues for the verbal while the individual is improving his reading and the use of non-verbal cues to elicit responses in verbal terms are the vital steps in learning for persons such as those described.

Briefly, the process contains three levels:

1. Substitution of non-verbal cue for verbal
  2. Association of verbal response with non-verbal cue
  3. Elicitation of verbal response from non verbal cue
1. Since the trainee is unable to cope with verbal cues such as text and reference materials, learning must begin by using non-verbal materials that permit immediate success in the acquisition of knowledge.
  2. Verbal response for the non-verbal cues are then used concurrently. This might be considered pattern formation, where the trainee starts to associate the verbal with the non-verbal.
  3. After the pattern has been learned, the trainee then must elicit the verbal response identified with the non-verbal cue, thus he does not only derive knowledge of the topic, but concomitantly his verbal ability is strengthened,

An example of this process can be found in the Skills Center's program for Licensed Practical Nurses. It was determined at the beginning of the first class that the trainees had serious reading defects. Many could not derive knowledge from the printed page on any level. Generally, this would mean that intensive reading instruction would be needed, but in the case of the LPN program, certain nursing material also had to be presented as outlined by state board policy. This meant that while the trainees were learning to improve their verbal skills they would also have to explore areas of anatomy and physiology.

If one has ever ventured upon a text of these areas he would surely be aware of the difficulty at hand. In addition to understanding the location and parts of the body the trainee had to be able to label, describe and identify the written symbols associated with those items. Without a high level of verbal ability on the part of the trainee the task can not be accomplished by traditional means. What was done is as follows:

Models of parts of the body and systems were introduced to the trainees. These three-dimensional, scale or full size models had no labels as to the locations of parts or identification of same. This permitted the instructor to describe and discuss the workings and functions in conceptual terms, unhampered by the concern for trying to memorize parts before the whole was understood. In groups the trainees could discuss these same functions and thus elicit the oral forms of the verbal symbols without having been confronted by the symbol.

The second step in the learning process was implemented by using charts and overlay transparencies, that allowed the instructor to show the verbal symbol (name of the part) with the graphic depiction of it. Indelible chalkboard drawings were used to develop systems step by step in terms of their parts and associated names.

The final process was to have the trainees label drawings duplicated by the spirit process as well as the chalkboard drawings so they could supply the verbal symbols for the non-verbal cues. Variations and combinations of systems were shown so that through repeated drill the trainees could respond in a favorable fashion.

Another problem with the L.P.N. trainees encountered was that of impaired vision the recognition of which brought about the use of other materials and techniques. Since the graduations on a thermometer are minute, they are barely seen by the normally sighted, but the person with any impairment of his visual acuity has little hope of differentiating between hairlines until he is at least aware of their meaning and sequence. So this might be done, a 5 foot plus model of a thermometer with a moveable mercury column was constructed. Using this model the instructor was able to point out the sequence and meaning of the lines and then using it as a working model he could test the group or individual on their ability to read a thermometer. Charts of a thermometer and its markings were duplicated and the trainees filled in the mercury column for the temperature stated by the instructor. Once it was evident that the trainee understood the process she was confronted with the real thermometer and even with less than perfect sight, success in reading temperatures resulted.

The teaching of the use of a hypodermic syringe and allied devices presents some similar problems because of size. At the Skills Center procedures related to this area are shown to a group using closed circuit T.V. In this manner trainees can see on large monitors the syringe that is being used by the instructor and can compare what they are doing with the real item in their possession to the greatly enlarged version on the screen of the monitor. As in all the previous examples worksheets are used for evaluation and verbal drill that aids in the reading process.

Closed circuit T.V. is an ideal medium for the depiction of small processes but less expensive substitute techniques can be devised such as a slide and tape program on how to tie springs made by the Upholstery instructor. In addition to presenting the material for the first time to a group of trainees, this program has been helpful for review and to help those trainees who might have missed the original demonstration.

Further exploration into the use of T.V. (video taped closed circuit T.V.) indicated a high level of efficacy when used in a therapeutic manner. For instance, when role playing in the area of bedside manners for the L.P.N. was done, the constructive criticism by the instructor seemed to be unfathomed to a great degree. Quite possibly this was due to the inability of the trainee to reenact her actual role without a "self halo effect". When the role playing was video taped and rerun during the critique period the trainee could observe as others had during the session exactly the manner she conveyed to the pseudo-patient. It was found, though, that great care must be taken when this technique is first used, since the trainee might become seriously depressed if the tape shows an extremely poor performance. Any vocational area that deals with person to person relationships can exploit this technique to great lengths (an area of particular relevance is that of sales and distributive education).

Commercially prepared T.V. programs played a role in the L.P.N. instruction. A series of "Return to Nursing" was shown on a New York educational station as a refresher course for the professional nurse who was returning to work after a pause of a few years. Since this was the level at which the program was aimed it fit in the L.P.N. program quite well, showing them in-hospital procedures and atmosphere before they were placed in the situation in reality. After they saw the practices carried out that they had discussed in the classroom much meaningful questioning took place due to the realistic frame of reference that had been created through the T.V. series.

In another occupational area, Clerical Skills, the development of instructional "systems" has been prodigious. While somewhat wary of the packaged system approach, a Kee Type Trainer was installed for us in the Medical Secretary class. This trainer developed by Dovall Teaching Machines, Ltd., has an illuminated keyboard chart visible to the class high enough to make it impossible to see the letter that is illuminated and the keyboard at the same time. The trainee types the letter seen on the board as it lights and because he cannot anticipate the next letter



develops a rhythm identical to that incorporated by the training unit. A typist sees the letter and responds by striking the proper key, a procedure that has shown merit when working with people with visual and/or perceptual disorders. While great variability in learning has occurred it can be said that there has been a universal increase in the speed of teaching the basic keyboard skills.

Another system for consideration is the R.E.C. touch typing system produced by the Responsive Environment Corporation which operates on the basic premise of multi-sensory appeal. Through metronomed verbal instruction (on audio tape) coordinated with a high illuminated keyboard the trainee-typist is able to progress to an average of twenty words a minute within 60 hours of exposure.

The Skills Center has experienced the enrollment of an increasing number of trainees who do not speak or understand English. Currently about thirty percent of our trainees are of non-English speaking origin. The problem presented by this condition was so great that maximum efforts were made to develop a program and materials which would remedy this language barrier and enable the trainee to pursue his vocational training.

The results of these efforts culminated in a correlation of materials, devices and systems which we proudly feel epitomizes the new approaches utilized in other areas of instruction.

A commercially prepared system entitled English 900 was implemented. This system is comprised of a series of audio tapes, books and workbooks which take the trainee from beginning English to a mastery of nine hundred base sentences enabling him to communicate verbally well enough to cope with many of the occupations offered at the Center. The system is predicated on the audio-lingual approach.

There are certain noteworthy features of this program which should be pointed out. First, is the number of specific aids that were incorporated in the program. A language laboratory using tape recorders, multiple jacks and earphones was devised. This is the core of the devices but numerous supplemental aids are also incorporated. Mirrors and video images demonstrate the teacher's and the trainee's mouths as they form the sounds which, being alien to the native language of the trainees, are reproduced only with concerted demonstration and practice. The interdental fricative, for example, requires concentrated attention for trainees who speak Spanish. T.V. provides both an instructional and a corrective facility.

Supplemental materials and devices include a training clock dial, calendars, phonetic charts, flash cards, pictures and objects. Each is used to drill, review or reinforce the learning initiated by the teachers or the English 900 series. A set of filmstrips with audio tapes produced by Chilton Co. is also employed. This particular device, however, has the disadvantage of being produced in England and is culturally somewhat unsuitable for our trainees. However we have used certain of its components with good results.

Models were referred to in the process of teaching body structure and function but as a class of instructional devices they must be further investigated. As a category of such aids they become the link between difficult-to-depict reality and conceptualization. Think, for example, of the trainee pursuing architectural drafting. He is to prepare house plans but has been exposed to the structural aspects of the craft only through verbal means. How does he proceed from the abstract to the concrete? One solution to this problem was a model of a house in the framed stage. With this the actual members can be examined and the graphic counterpart can be located and learned. Carrying this concept a bit further and into a more abstract area we can aid the trainee in the electronics field by using work circuit boards with interchangeable components laid out in the form of a schematic drawing. When components are changed the effect on the overall circuit can be observed without the intervening difficulty of a lengthy circuit analysis and trace.

Often unused in the baking shop is the chalkboard or if used it is only for the group observance of recipes and mixes. An unusually imaginative instructor who experienced difficulty in showing the rhythm needed in cake decorating found that the chalkboard was an ideal surface to decorate with icing. Since all movements must be exaggerated due to the great size of the surface, the all important rhythmic motion was able to be observed and ultimately duplicated by the fledgling cake decorators.

Up to this point reference has been made almost exclusively to the material aspect of our programs. However, in the Skills Center it is felt that the focal point of activity and learning is the instructor. Without effective teacher organization and implementation, the materials touched upon achieve little results. The teaching technique developed in the program of English for foreign language trainees is our concept of team teaching geared to the needs of the trainees. We have two instructors, one male, one female. Both are multi-lingual. They combine their efforts in the classroom, each pursuing those aspects of the program for which he or she is more capable. For example, one is excellent with the phonetic instruction; the other excels in the conduct of audio-lingual drills. They have collaborated in devising techniques which are mutually employed. The team teaching goes beyond this. One of the instructors in accord with the vocational teacher takes part in the shop class by aiding in the acquisition of technical or related vocabulary. In this way the trainee can pursue his occupational instruction from the outset even though his language ability is severely limited. The same type of assistance is given to the counselor who attempts to relate to the needs of the trainee.

It seems that herein lies the key to effective instruction of the disadvantaged. The development of skills requires a departure from the traditional methods of textbook and lecture presentations. Training and attitude development require the maximum implementation of the most suitable materials and devices so organized that they provide the most lucid presentation, adequate and varied drill, effective review and finally valid evaluation which can be made evident to the trainee. All of this can only be utilized by well-trained instructors with imagination and initiative. Lastly, such a program must never cease to expand and develop. Investigation of new materials and experimentation in the classes will maintain the vitality of the teaching and learning process.

**VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FOR THE DISADVANTAGED:  
PLANNING, ORGANIZING AND OPERATING  
THROUGH A SYSTEMS APPROACH**

by

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**Presented at the**

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March 14, 1969

## **PLANNING, ORGANIZING AND OPERATING VOC-ED PROGRAMS: THE SYSTEMS APPROACH**

The 1968 amendments to the Vocational Education Act define a disadvantaged American under Section 102(b) and Section 122(a)(4)(A). I find it more meaningful to cite the socio-economic condition of the disadvantaged American than to semantically define him for programming. It is obvious to most Americans that we have come to the point in our society where a "real world" concept of the disadvantaged is needed. What we are really discussing is the quality of life that the Black, Puerto-Rican, Mexican-American and poor white masses see others enjoy but which is still denied to them. What is new in the Winter of 1969 is a sharp delineation between remedies emanating from the law and the predominance of hard core realities associated with economic, educational and social disadvantage for which the remedies are yet to be implemented.

Let me cite a few data in support of this premise:

According to the *President's Manpower Report for 1969*, the occupational structure of the Negro labor force is seriously imbalanced and out of line with the work force in general, as well as technological advances. Negroes are disproportionately represented in lower occupations and jobs. The situation has shown only slight improvement during the 23 years since World War II.

For example, Negroes make up 11 per cent of all employed workers . . . but they comprise 44 per cent of all household workers, four times their proportion of all employed workers; they make up 21 per cent of all service workers and 26 per cent of all laborers, more than twice their proportion of employed workers. On the other hand, blacks make up less than 6 per cent of all employed craftsmen, 3 per cent of all salesmen and 6 per cent of all clerical workers . . . 43 per cent of all employed black males are working in jobs below the semi-skilled level compared with only 15 per cent of employed white workers.

It is this imbalance that contributes to job insecurity. The Negro occupational structure does not lend itself to adjustments to technological change. It also means vulnerability to cyclical fluctuations and unemployment.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics' report in October 1968 revealed that Negro workers were unemployed at the rate of 8.2 per cent. Average annual unemployment among Negro workers has not fallen below 8 per cent since 1953, sixteen years ago. It has been twice that of whites during most of the period since World War II.

### **Historical Background**

How can vocational educators plan, organize and operate dynamic programs and services for the disadvantaged using the systems approach? It has not been the pattern in these United States to attack problems of social crisis in a systematic way.



The historical behavior has been brush fire oriented to the extent that, whenever socio-economic crisis occurs in American society, the Federal government is called upon to adjudicate the crisis through some form of programmatic funding. When the Revolutionary War of 1776 ended, the nation found its fiscal resources at a low ebb and it moved the Congress to pass the Land Ordinance Act of 1789 to allocate lands in the new Louisiana purchased territory for public schools. The sale of these lands rebuilt the Federal coffers and resolved the socio-economic crisis while at the same time promoting public education. The 1849 discovery of gold in California, a century later, incited the Eastern U.S. population to head westward. Immediately, the nation was confronted with a socio-economic problem of providing the resources for laying railroads across the plains and farming arid land. Congress responded in 1862 with the Land Grant College Act to prepare professional mechanics and farmers to adjudicate that crisis.

Nearly 50 years later the sinking of the Maine produced a need for a systematic process for manpower development that Congress did not respond to until the Fall of 1914 when World War I got underway. Our need to "catch up with the Germans" led to the passage of the Smith-Hughes Vocational Education Act of 1917. Following the economic boom of the late twenties, the great depression of the thirties produced the New Deal legislation, including the N.Y.A., W.P.A., N.R.A. and C.C.C. In 1946 Congress amended the Smith-Hughes Act with the George-Barden Act.

Hardly 15 years later the Russians had launched Sputnik 1 and the nation's journalists asserted that we needed to "catch up with the Russians." Congress responded with the National Defense Education Act of 1958, including its Title VIII provision for Technical Education. During the same period the returning veterans moved their families from the farms to the cities, and Congress responded with the Area Redevelopment Act of 1960. These new city residents needed urban skills to replace their rural skills. Congressional response was the 1962 Manpower Development Training Act and in 1963 Congress rewrote the 1917 Vocational Education Act (Perkins Bill) and in 1964 Congress enacted the Civil Rights Act and in 1965, to make the Civil Rights Act workable, it passed the O.E.O. legislation creating; instead of a National Youth Administration, a Neighborhood Youth Corp; instead of Civilian Conservation Camps, Job Corp Centers; instead of a Work Progress Administration, a Bureau of Work-Training Programs. In 1966, Congress enacted both the Elementary and Secondary School Act and the Voting Rights Act. In 1968 we amended the 1963 Vocational Education Act. So from once per century to once per half century to once every quarter century to every time Congress convenes, we are requesting new money to adjudicate social problems by stating the problem in programmatic terms of the socio-economically disadvantaged . . . without taking a systems approach to the identification of the problem. The realities are that two billion dollars are appropriated in Fiscal 1969 by Congress for manpower-oriented education and training with less than \$200 million appropriated for vocational education after 51 years in the occupational education business.

Should we really be concerned about providing education for the so-called disadvantaged or should we be concerned, as James E. Allen, Jr., New York State Education Commissioner, now United States Education Commissioner, recently told the New York City Board of Education, that we "must improve schools in the slums immediately." Moreover, he urged educators from across the nation to consider "what kind of schools will turn the tide in hope of the ghettos. What patterns of cooperation involving whites, Negroes, business, industry, labor and government can rejuvenate slum area schools." What can be done to assure parents in slum areas of a more meaningful role in the schools and in the education of their children. Is it not our problem that we have used the inductive approach in solving social crisis (vocational education problems), and have not used the systems approach (deductive/inductive) methods for solving our problems and planning effective vocational education?

To examine methodology for systematic planning as related to vocational education, against the previously cited societal framework in 1969, is a complex task. To plan and operate educational programs requires adjudicating pathological conditions of the unemployed black and other disadvantaged minorities in America.

## The Systems Approach

The State of Pennsylvania is in the process of conducting a statewide vocational education systems study in an attempt to develop a systematic procedure for vocational education program planning. They have devised a modification of the 'D.O.D. McNamara concept' that I consider the proper planning cycle steps. First is Problem definition, including the general statement of the problem and the basic objectives. Then describe existing conditions (constraints and the environment of the problem and the translation which includes the interpretation and projection of the constraints) and some measurable goals based on the objectives. The problem-solving functions include an analysis of the problem, the necessary tradeoffs and the synthesis of a plan. The analysis must include an identification of the total system elements, the relationship between these elements, and the requirements and approaches. To conduct a tradeoff, one must develop selection criteria, order and rank the approaches using the selection criteria, and make selections. The synthesis must organize selected approaches into a system or plan and provide information for the next level of planning.

I have no compunctions in condemning the manner in which we attempt to apply the systems approach to vocational education planning for the disadvantaged. Let me remind you of a statement by Charles J. Hitch in his "Decision-making for Defense."

It is my experience that the hardest problems for the systems analyst are not those of analytic techniques . . . what distinguishes the useful and productive analyst is his ability to formulate (or design) the problem; to choose appropriate objectives; to define the relevant, important environments or situations in which to test the alternatives; to judge the reliability of his cost and other data, and not least his ingenuity in investing new systems or alternatives to evaluate.

If the procedures for vocational education program planning as set forth in the Pennsylvania Vocational Education Study are to be effective in vocational education, we must heed Mr. Hitch's warning and insure that we choose appropriate objectives that describe the environment. We speak of special socio-economic problems as a constraint. Are these special socio-economic problems not really problems of racism in hiring policies, promotional policies and other policies germane to employment? We speak of synthesis and the development of local social economic plans. Are our training institutions prepared to negotiate the resolution of problems for their students in hiring policies, promotional policies, etc.? Do our vocational education institutions attempt to influence the major employers, unions and other parts of the establishment to have open-door policies in spite of race, creed or color? Have we really examined the problems confronting the disadvantaged minority as they attempt to obtain employment compatible with their vocational training? I submit that we must re-examine our systems approach to vocational education program planning and restate our objectives and define our *constraints as they are* and define our constraints for *what they are* in order that we may analyze the *real problem and synthesize an effective program plan*. We must look anew at our process to develop realistic, functional training.

A typical systems approach cycle covers the elements outlined in Figure 1. Although the term systems is now associated with corporate management and the United States Department of Defense, it is not a new approach for Vocational, Trade and Industrial educators. Essentially, Fryklund's Job Analysis method that was used almost exclusively for curriculum development for a single shop course is now submitted to you as the methodology for planning, operating and evaluating a total voc-ed program. The term "task analysis" or work breakdown structure is simply the scientific method employed in developing a programmed instructional text, audio or video tape or in analyzing a full range of curricular (candidate) offerings for a local or state system of vocational education.

# THE SYSTEMS APPROACH CYCLE

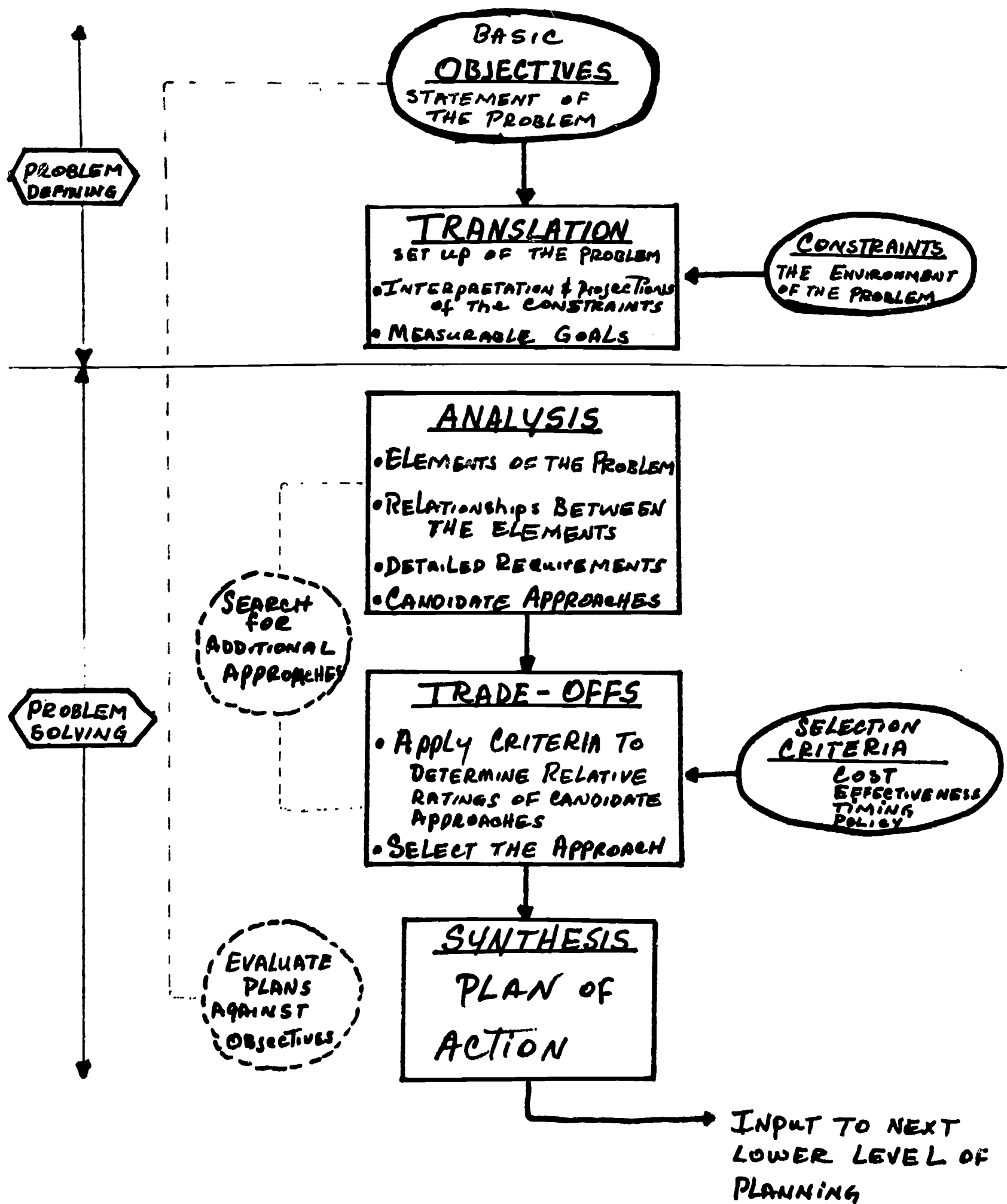


Figure 1

The heart of my point of view is that the methodology of the Systems approach is a total look at the vocational planning process, including the social restrictions in the labor force. Such restrictions based on age, sex, religion, and race are problem elements that must be constantly analyzed by vocational educators. Despite the presence of the 1964 Civil Rights Act prohibiting discrimination in employment, the issue of race and color are still the most socially restricting elements that vocational educators must aggressively deal with, if the basic objectives (to fit each learner for gainful employment) for operating service programs in agriculture, home economics, T&I, technical, business and distributive education are to be achieved.

The data-gathering process at the problem-defining level must include an honest appraisal without naivete about the environmental constraints for achieving the objectives of voc-ed 1968 funded programs. Regardless whether or not the planning and operations are for junior high school, pre-vocational, senior high vocational and pre-technical or special occupationally oriented schools, or for a city or for an area covering several counties, the following elements remain constant:

- |                                 |                    |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Recruitment                  | 4. Skill Training  |
| 2. Counseling                   | 5. Job Development |
| 3. Related/Academic Instruction | 6. Placement       |

Public schools in general have heretofore only assumed the responsibility for items 3 and 4, related and shop instruction including cooperative education in T&I and Distributive Education.

The pathological plight of minority youth led to the reinterpretation of vocational education legislation that schools should assume the above six roles for each student, whether an early school-leaver, full-time student or a returnee seeking retraining due to job obsolescence or social restrictions in the labor force.

The systems approach cycle requires carefully developed data-gathering forms for relating the procedural flow to problem analysis. The "how-to-do-it" process requires that three levels of planning take place: (1) socio-economic planning, (2) vocational education program planning, and (3) vocational education resources planning. A cursory review of socio-economic planning for the purposes of this paper includes the following:

### **SOCIO-ECONOMIC PLANNING**

A description of the socio-economic needs and plans of the local area which affect the planning of a vocational technical program must be identified as the objective.

#### **Constraints**

This involves identification of existing socio-economic conditions which influence the planning of a voc-tech program. These constraints include (a) socio-economic needs, (b) industry needs surveys, (c) *special socio-economic* problems that focus on:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Hiring practices of minority members           | 6. Per cent of minorities in the in-school population        |
| 2. Entry level requirements                       | 7. Per cent of minorities in the out-of-school population    |
| 3. Apprentice union practices                     | 8. Types of educational/occupational opportunities existing. |
| 4. Per cent of minorities in the local population |  |
| 5. Per cent of minorities in the local work force |  |



### **Translation**

Required is administrative interpretation and projection of the socio-economic data into future requirements that are measurable as goals and objectives.

### **Analysis**

In beginning the problem solving process, an identification of the system elements forces a determination of the relationships between the elements. These relationships detail the requirements for course or curriculum approaches and/or offerings. Back-up data included for the analysis are a list of potential industries and data relative to criteria which can be used to rate the attractiveness of potential new industries for the community.

### **Trade-Offs**

A selection criteria must be established for determining which industries and governmental agencies will be selected for voc ed planning. Those groups growing faster than the rate of growth of the general population? As fast as? Or slower than the national, state or local rate. Additionally, a rating system is needed for selection of each voc ed program candidate offering. The actual selection process then establishes the curricular offerings for the local school, city-county or area.

### **Synthesis**

The voc ed master plan based on the socio-economic input data is in effect the synthesis of the selected approaches. This synthesis forms the planning input basis for the next level of planning.

## **VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM PLANNING**

### **Objectives**

The definition of a vocational and technical education program in terms of occupational fields and courses which will improve the local socio-economic situation for disadvantaged students must be unique to the employment market rather than the schools.

### **Constraints**

The identification of existing and presently planned programs, as defined by courses of occupational instruction, must reflect the surveys of the supply of students and their occupational preferences. Where previous exposure to the occupational fields is non-existent, each potential minority student must be encouraged to enroll and prepare while being counseled about the environmental constraints that exist. This approach should be followed up with an honest commitment to each student as to the steps that the vocational educator will take to assure him of equal educational and employment opportunity.

### **Translation**

The translation of industry/governmental employment needs into occupational training needs provides the basis for stating local vocational education goals in measurable terms of accountability.

## **Analysis (Problem Solving)**

Program planning analysis is geared to specific steps of determining (on data forms):

1. The annual employment needs of potential new industries and governmental agencies in the community.
2. The annual needs of existing industries/government.
3. The total occupational training needs of the community.
4. Shortages and surpluses.
5. Reviewing the shortage categories in terms of the obvious special efforts that the Vocational Education program planner must make to assure opportunity for minorities in the community.

## **Trade-Offs**

To determine the value rating assigned earlier in the Socio-Economic planning phase for each of the occupational training needs, use criteria such as occupational density, occupational growth, labor shortage, and skill level for the *actual selection* of courses of occupational instruction.

## **Synthesis**

The synthesis of this planning phase establishes the Vocational and Technical Education program for funding as defined by

1. occupational fields
2. courses of occupational instruction.

The final level of planning, though often distorted in its significance as a planning component, is unquestionably the point where the action really is.

## **VOCATIONAL EDUCATION RESOURCES PLANNING**

### **Objectives**

The resource requirements in the form of people, facilities, equipment and supplies must be determined in program cost language to implement the Vocational-Technical Education program. Provisions have been made in the 1968 amendments for Vocational Education to utilize corporate structures to assist them either in taking a gestalt-type systems view of their program plans or in operations. Profit-oriented firms who are expected to absorb the product of the vocational-technical curriculum should also find a market in the vocational-technical environment for getting the job done. Always the end objective should be placement of the disadvantaged at each employment level.

### **Constraints**

Resource management planning constraints must reflect an identification of existing and presently planned:

1. Programs as defined by course/resources combinations and by
2. facilities and major equipment and by
3. financial resource procurement limitations.

### **Translation**

These constraints can now be translated into resource requirements by courses, including teachers, teacher-aides, audio-visuals, programmed materials, traditional instructional supplies, etc.

The projection of the resource unit costs and technological developments into a five-year resources plan enlarges the parameters of planning for subsequent decision-making and updating of data.

Such a process minimizes the "brushfire" administrative behavior at each point of confrontation with the victimized minority community. Where program modifications are necessary, there can be a planned point of reference for all parties involved.

### **Analysis (Problem Solving)**

Specifically, the analysis of the resources management planning function is geared to the following steps:

1. Determine the fiscal requirements per course.
2. Determine the operating and capital outlay costs for each course.
3. Determine alternative programs or combinations of alternatives.

Alternatives should point up the relative merits of developing facilities in certain program areas versus developing facilities in certain program areas versus developing cooperative on-the-job training opportunities for youths and adults in the private and governmental sectors.

### **Trade-Offs**

An exhaustive review of the resources, or cost analysis, is a trade-off forcing function to determine how can the fitting of individuals for gainful employment in this town, through this planning and operating method, be accomplished at the least cost with the greatest amount of efficiency?

Criteria to be used include:

- |                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Socio-economic value ratings. | 4. Funding availability   |
| 2. Resources cost per student    | 5. Course attractiveness  |
| 3. Value rating cost             | 6. Relevance to the needs of students as perceived by students. |

Administrative decisions can be made for review modification and approval by the community. Community here means the local board that represents the community, the industrial/business community, advisory committee and/or the general citizenry through public hearings. Such approval is, in effect, the selection of vocational education programs.

### **Synthesis**

The final aspect of the three-phased planning process of socio-economic planning, vocational-education program planning and vocational education resources planning is the establishing of the local program by:

1. Occupational fields
2. Courses of occupational instruction
3. Resource requirements
4. Cost estimates and funding sources with a constant updating of information to accomplish the objectives.

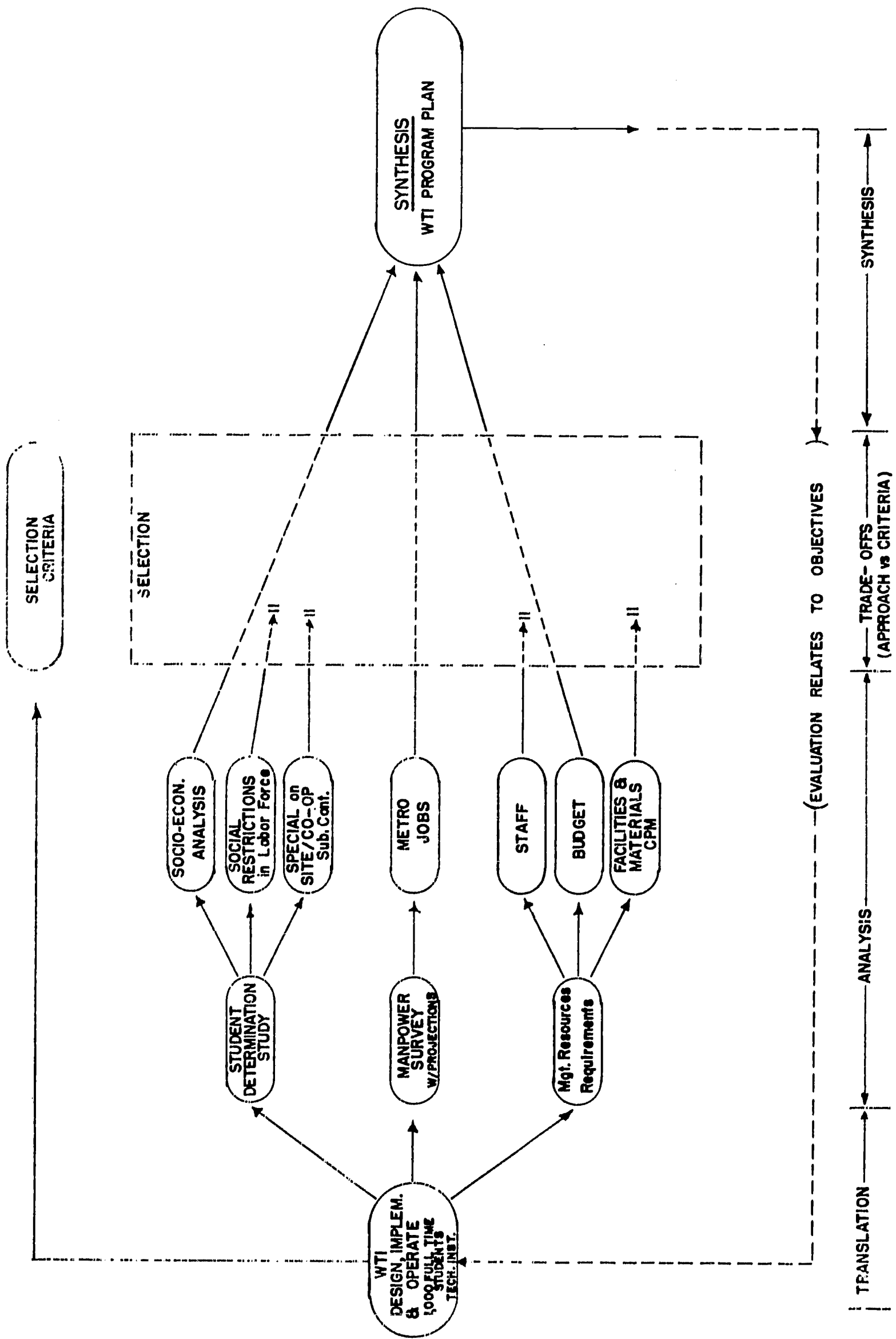


Figure 2

WTI SYSTEMS APPROACH PLANNING MODEL



## CASE STUDY: WASHINGTON TECHNICAL INSTITUTE

The enactment of Public Law 89-791 by Congress in November of 1966, creating the Washington Technical Institute, provided an opportunity for the application of the systems approach to the planning of an institution on the local level that was vocational in objective and technical in its content.

An example of how this works is provided by Figure 2, which shows the planning model used in conceptualizing, organizing and initially operating the 1,000 full-time student Washington Technical Institute in eleven months.

The District of Columbia is the nation's ninth largest city, the heart of the tenth most populous metropolitan area in the United States (nearly 2.4 million persons). As of 1965, Washington ranked fourth in the nation in rate of growth. Unlike most other cities, the District's growth is highly stimulated by national and international crisis while suffering a relative cessation of growth during periods of tranquility and prosperity on the national and international scene. As the nation's capital city, its population is greater than that of twelve states, with more students enrolled in the public schools than there are people in Little Rock, Arkansas, New Haven, Connecticut, or Berkeley, California. Although its population is double that of Atlanta, Georgia, the District has less than one-half as much land area.

### Basic Objectives

The Washington Technical Institute has its own governance created in the legislation. As such, the Institute was planned from scratch. The development of Board policies, administrative procedures, salary structures, retirement system and other fringe benefits were placed in a program time frame. The application of the systems approach as outlined in Figure 2 began with the statement of the problem (broad objectives). This problem was to design, implement and structure a 1,000 full-time student Technical Institute for the District of Columbia.

### Translation

The translation of the objectives into analyzable components represented a major activity. Three studies were generated:

#### (a) *Manpower Projection Study with Curricular Implications*

This study analyzed the public and private sector jobs market. An assessment was made of those market areas by Standard Industrial Classifications that were growing faster than the population, as fast as, and slower than the population growth rate of the metropolitan area. The curricular implications of this socio-economic analysis provided candidate course offerings in the several technologies, information management, environmental sciences, health and public service areas of the curriculum.

#### (b) *Student Determination Study*

Clearly delineated employment patterns and opportunities generated the need for determining who desired career development training and on what basis. The post high school educational demand for career development educational opportunities in the District of Columbia was expressed as 35,000 part-time student potential and a full-time student potential of 10,000 within the decade.

The distribution of student interest against candidate curricular offerings showed a .86 correlation for the 4,100 applicants seeking the initial 1,000 student openings.

Of particular significance in the analysis of the job market data secured through the Manpower Survey was the identification of jobs that traditionally have not been filled by the population, characteristic of the District of Columbia. Well over three-fifths of the population is black, a situation unique in American cities. Obviously, the social re-

strictions that exist in the labor force based on sex, age, religion, national origin and race is reflected disproportionately in the population characteristics of the job market in the District. Of the social restrictions examined, race represented the highest degree of restriction. The decision-making process at this point in the analysis required a defining and redefining of the selection criteria for both, curricular offerings and students. Not being able to seriously modify the variables as structured in the data, an "open door" policy was instituted into the selection criteria.

An additional decision-making input was then required, beyond the point of this planning model, that properly was a matter of institutional operating style and procedures. The analysis produced the magnitude limits of the socioeconomic variables. Moreover, it pinpointed the kind of administrative awareness that a vocational education administrator must have of programming realities, without engaging in the *coding of socio-economic issues* in "culturally deprived" and "disadvantaged" labels.

### (c) *Resources Management Requirements*

The third major study area was that of resources needed to subserve the vocational education process as stated in the Basic Objectives. Resources are defined as men, materials and services, categorized as staff, budgets, facilities equipment and supplies. One aspect of the systems approach is the establishing of selection criteria for performance of required tasks in the managing of resources. We used the critical path method for scheduling and updating plans for the renovation of facilities. Having secured eight red brick, four-story buildings at the National Bureau of Standards in the lower Chevy Chase section of Northwest Washington, comprising 300,000 square feet of floor space, we proceeded to design the temporary campus. The determining of costing factors by program activity, by curricular offering, and by staffing requirements, led to the development of a Planning-Programming-Budgeting System. The P.P.B.S. was the same application of the systems approach used in the total institutional planning. The basic difference, of course, was in developing fiscal source documents with program memoranda of justification.

### Analysis

At the bottom of Figure 2 the spectrum covering analysis is essentially that phase of the systems approach involving the reduction of the multiple components and approaches into segments so that each can be examined. Questions of fact were subjected to the test of observed experience. Those aspects of the problem that involved value judgments were so identified and the basis of the judgment spelled out.

Two distinct levels of analysis took place. In cost effectiveness of construction, arithmetic processes, operations research and economics were applied through the three studies. In most of the program activities shown in the synthesis in Figure 3, relatively little, if any, technical sophistication was needed. Rather, it was a matter of pulling together already existing data in a meaningful way. This was largely a drawing upon technical and non-technical program development studies previously done that were relevant to our objectives.

### Trade-Offs (Selection Criteria)

Analyses of the several alternatives identified due to an earlier cited studies required that the environmental constraints affecting the task to be performed would need criteria established that would form the basis for determining how well the possible approaches met the program objectives. The selection criteria that follows was applied to each program activity.

- a. Performance
- b. Cost/Effectiveness
- c. Timing
- d. Risk
- e. Policy

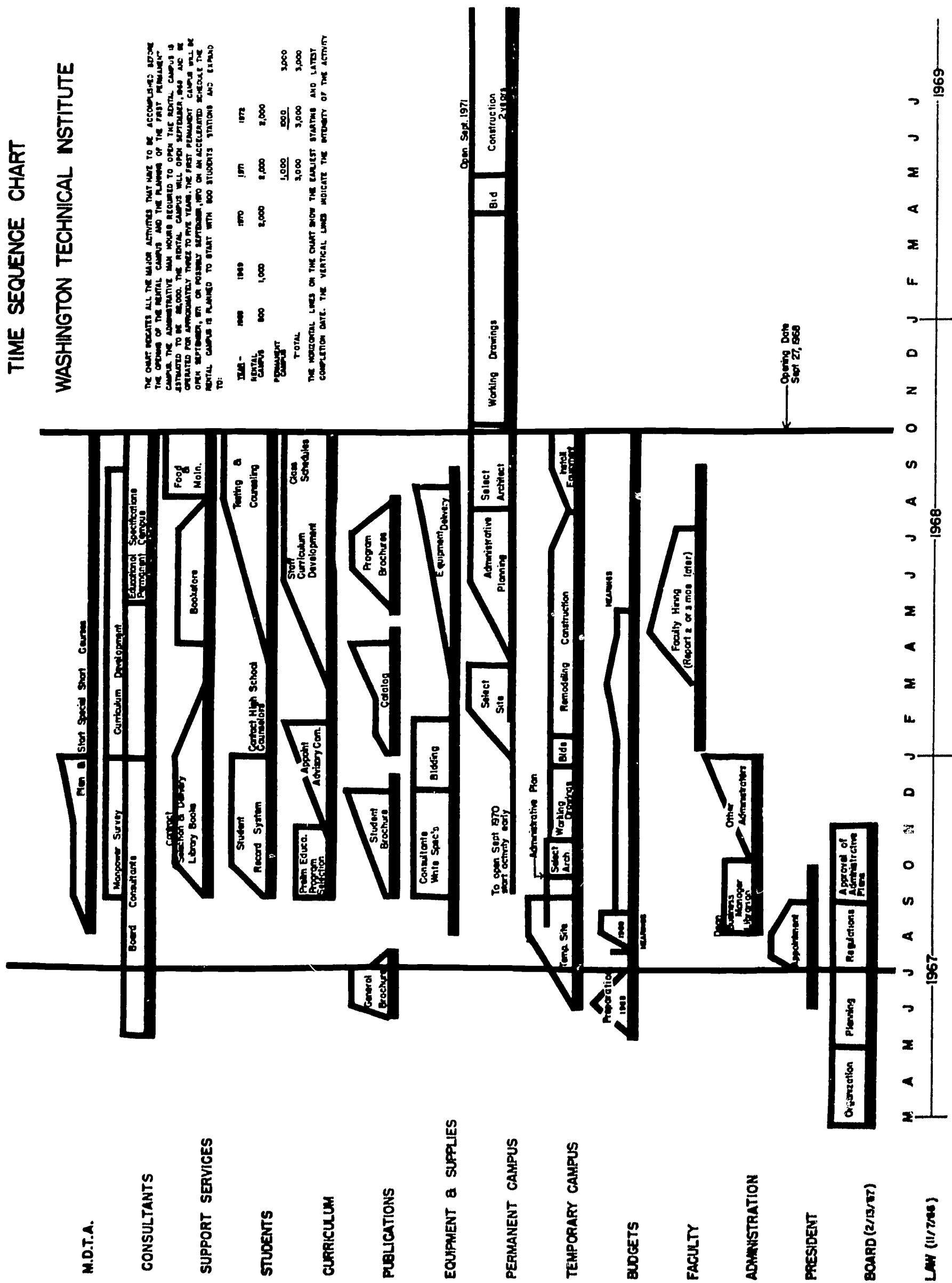
Each criterion was carefully examined as a "trade-off" for using one approach in preference to another.

## WASHINGTON TECHNICAL INSTITUTE

THE CHART OUTLINES ALL THE MAJOR ACTIVITIES THAT HAVE TO BE ACCOMPLISHED BEFORE THE OPENING OF THE RENTAL CAMPUS AND THE PLANNERS OF THE RENTAL CAMPUS IS CAMPUS. THE ADMINISTRATIVE MAN HOURS REQUIRED TO OPEN THE RENTAL CAMPUS IS ESTIMATED TO BE \$2,000. THE RENTAL CAMPUS WILL OPEN SEPTEMBER 1969 AND BE OPERATED FOR APPROXIMATELY THREE TO FIVE YEARS. THE FIRST PERMANENT CAMPUS WILL BE OPEN SEPTEMBER, 67, OR POSSIBLY SEPTEMBER, 1970 ON AN ACCELERATED SCHEDULE. THE RENTAL CAMPUS IS PLANNED TO START WITH 800 STUDENTS STATIONS AND EXPAND TO:

YEAR -	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972
MENTAL CAMPUS	800	1,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
PERMANENT CAMPUS				<u>1,000</u>	<u>200</u>
TOTAL				3,000	3,000

THE HORIZONTAL LINES ON THE CHART SHOW THE EARLIEST STARTING AND LATEST COMPLETION DATE. THE VERTICAL LINES INDICATE THE INTENSITY OF THE ACTIVITY



### Figure 3

## Synthesis

The Perting (Preliminary Evaluation and Review Techniques) of each of the events and activities during the selection process led to the program distribution as shown in Figure 3. Systems approach synthesis: Washington Tech Time-Sequence-Chart.

Basic objective generated sixteen events that had to occur as program activities in order to open the Institute on September 27, 1968. Each event including the legislative enactment date was placed in a time frame. The vertical lines represented beginning and ending dates. Alphabets located at the bottom of Figure 3 represented the months of each year. Diagonal and horizontal lines opposite temporary campus, curriculum, etc., represented magnitude of effort expressed in manhours necessary to complete a task on schedule.

A separate back-up data chart was developed for each event pinpointing critical paths of activity for which slip-page or missing deadlines could not be permitted to happen.

The matching of student request with curricular offerings and faculty recruitment required closer monitoring and coordinating than did the renovation schedule.

This synthesis is but one of many formats that can be used for delineating program categories and sub-categories for program implementation.

The permanent campus development line is now six months behind schedule. The securing of an urban renewal site of 24 acres is an extremely slow, detailed process. Site acquisition by May 1, 1969, will necessitate a compression of architectural working drawing time to meet a September 1971 permanent campus opening date.

The identical application of the systems approach was applied to Fiscal Years 1970-75 needs in precisely the same manner as 1969 to produce a multi-year program and financial plan. As we acquire operating experience and a more realistic awareness of constraints, trade-offs will take place monthly or annually.

The Washington Technical Institute systems approach, used essentially as described here, has proven an effective tool for planning program activities. When skillfully implemented, the systems approach provides a disciplined technique for:

- Effective identification of projected requirements for complex activities.

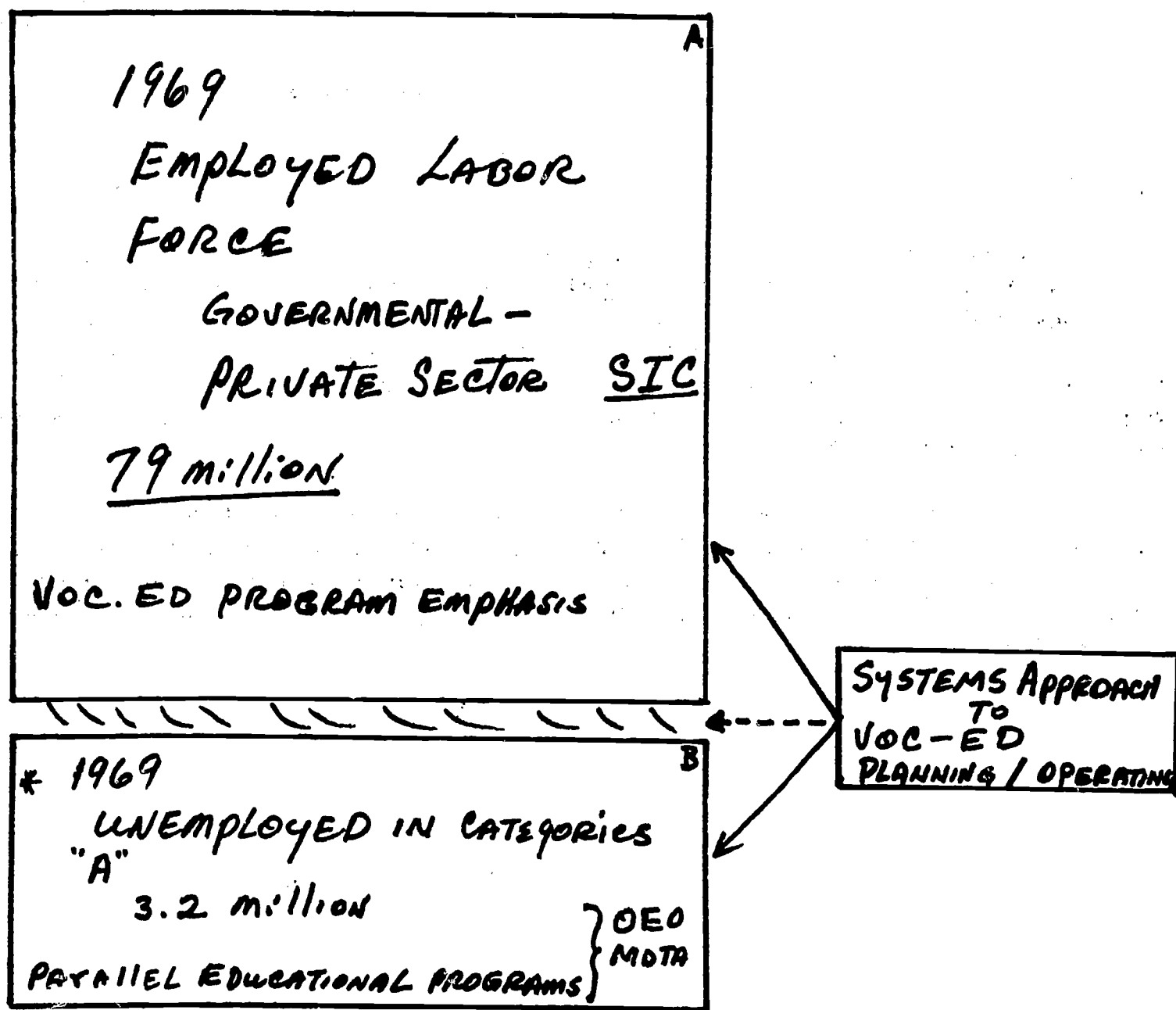
- Thorough assessment of the effect of changes in environment on the development plans.

- Timely identification of problems and study requirements in the conceptual phase of a program.

- Accurate documentation tracing the chain of decisions and supporting reasons for communicating justifying recommended courses of action.

It is reasonable to predict that the applications of this approach to multi-year planning will expand, and will provide substantiated bases for decision-making relating to public vocational-technical education and to the management of program resources.





\* ASSUMED 4% NATIONAL UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

Figure 4

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION/MANPOWER PROGRAM GAP

## Conclusion

This kind of planning model should help us get out of the "brushfire" business of reacting to symptoms of socio-economic crises. It is obvious that the present level of nearly two billion dollars in manpower funding will go the route of the alphabetized new deal of N.Y.A., W.P.A. days. The economic analysis of supply and demand has consistently been made as though America's minorities did not exist. The exemplary program provision of the 1968 Amendments is designed to give vocational educators lead time to incorporate into their program planning functions now being carried on by M.D.T.A., community action agencies and the like. It is not reasonable to assume that these agencies will yield their decision-making prerogatives of the trade-off level to vocational educators without being involved in the decision-making process themselves. *The systems approach provides for this involvement.*

The hard core realities of gainful employment of the economically disadvantaged is a serious indictment on vocational education planning and behavior 52 years after the passage of the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917.

Vocational educators must now take into account the fantastic growth in governmental services and the increased concern on the part of municipal, state and federal governmental agencies to become the employer of the last resort. New occupational fields include community planning of model cities, slum housing rehabilitation, law enforcement, demolition and construction of riot destroyed areas throughout the nation. Freeway construction, that makes islands of the "inner city ghettos," represents curricular areas for which vocational educators must provide program planning and implementation if any significant long range changes are to be made in job preparation and placement for America's disadvantaged minorities.

The vocational education/manpower program Gap serves as a graphic reminder of how the so-called disadvantaged American's needs fall through the crack. The point of impact of the planning process must bridge the gap between the specially-funded, slogan-oriented parallel programs with the permanent ongoing vocational education programs using both a deductive and an inductive process for planning, operating and evaluating the effectiveness in job placement terms.